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Producing the history play

The agency of repertory companies, stationers, and patronage networks in early modern England

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**Producing the history play:
The agency of repertory companies,
stationers, and patronage networks
in early modern England**

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**PhD in English
King's College London
2017**

Abstract

This thesis offers a reappraisal of the early modern history play, locating the genre in the participation of its producers and users, and concentrating in particular on the repertory companies, stationers, and patronage networks that have shaped historical drama in England. While previous accounts have tended to focus on Shakespeare's English histories, as catalogued in the First Folio, and used these plays to define the genre retrospectively, this study recognizes the classificatory elusiveness of terms such as 'history' and the diverse ideas of genre and history that were circulating during the period. This study prioritizes a selection of plays and production networks from the Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Caroline periods to examine local engagements that more fully reflect the shifting position and utility of history plays on stage and in print.

In interrogating assumptions about what constitutes a history play, this thesis examines five chronological case studies that suggest the importance of a more inclusive understanding of 'history', demonstrate how theatrical companies, publishers, and patrons have influenced the history play, and provide evidence of the synchronic readings that this study aims to privilege. Chapters are devoted to production networks involving Thomas Creede and Queen Elizabeth's Men, Andrew Wise and the Chamberlain's Men, and the Herbert family and the King's Men, as well as to the agency of individual stationers, including Nathaniel Butter, and censoring authorities, such as the Master of the Revels. Taken together, these case studies draw attention to the political valencies of history plays as they are negotiated by their agents of production and to wider issues of play performance, publication, and patronage. Moving away from ideas of generic fixity and defined canons, this study positions the history play through networks of participation and influence that reveal the varied ways in which the past was negotiated.

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List of Abbreviations

Arber	Edward Arber (ed.), <i>A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640</i> , 5 vols (London: privately printed, 1875-1984)
BL	British Library
Chambers <i>ES</i>	E.K. Chambers, <i>The Elizabethan Stage</i> , 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923)
<i>CSP Domestic</i>	Robert Lemon and Mary Anne Everett (eds.), <i>Calendar of State Papers: Domestic Series, of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, and James I (1547-1625)</i> , 12 vols (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1856-72)
<i>DEEP</i>	<i>Database of Early English Playbooks</i> , ed. by Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser. Created 2007. < http://deep.sas.upenn.edu >
F	Folio
Greg	W.W. Greg, <i>A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration</i> , 4 vols (London: Bibliographic Society at the University Press, Oxford, 1939-59)
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
<i>LPD</i>	<i>Lost Plays Database</i> , ed. by Roslyn L. Knutson, David McInnis, and Matthew Steggle (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 2009). < www.lostplays.org >
<i>MRDE</i>	<i>Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England</i>
NA	National Archives, Kew
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) online edn < http://oxforddnb.com >
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
Q	Quarto
<i>RD</i>	<i>Renaissance Drama</i>
<i>REED</i>	<i>Records of Early English Drama</i>
<i>SB</i>	<i>Studies in Bibliography</i>
<i>SEL</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900</i>
Gurr, <i>SPC</i>	Andrew Gurr, <i>The Shakespearian Playing Companies</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996)
<i>SQ</i>	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>

- SS *Shakespeare Survey*
- STC A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave (eds.), *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640*, 2nd edn, rev. by W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson, and Katharine F. Pantzer, 3 vols (London: Bibliographical Society, 1976-1991)
- Textual Companion* Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett and William Montgomery, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987)
- Wiggins, *Catalogue* Martin Wiggins, *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, 6 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011-16)

Note on the text

As this study concentrates on local engagements and readings of history plays between 1584 and 1642, drawing significantly on the printed presentation of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century playbooks, all quotations and references are taken from these early witnesses, as opposed to modern critical editions. Original spellings and punctuation are preserved in all quotations, although the long medial ‘s’ is regularized. Contractions are silently expanded, while editorial emendations are contained in square brackets ‘[]’. STC numbers are incorporated into the bibliographic details for all sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts from which quotations are taken to clarify the edition used (where relevant) and to assist in locating the material.

Throughout this study, the parenthetical dates affixed to titles refer to the date of first publication, unless otherwise specified. The titles of extant plays are given in italics, while lost plays are indicated using quotation marks. All titles are given in modernized spelling and in their most recognizable form. For example, Shakespeare’s *Tragedie of King Richard the second* (as it was first published in 1597) is referred to as *Richard II* (1597), although the full bibliographic details for the text preserve the original title form and spelling. This principle is followed consistently throughout the thesis. The early quarto and octavo editions of *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI* are referred to as *The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York*, respectively, owing to the substantial differences between the folio and single-text editions and this study’s emphasis on their early publication history, which would be distorted by using the retrospective sequential titles.

The terms ‘professional’ and ‘commercial’ are used to refer to plays performed by adult and boys’ companies in front of paying audiences, distinguishing them from the more exclusively private, ‘non-professional’ plays that were written and staged at universities or Inns of Court,

as well as closet and academic plays, translations, and other forms of entertainment, including pageants and masques (which were regularly written and performed by ‘professional’ dramatists and acting companies, but which had a different audience and performance context). While references to non-professional plays will be incorporated throughout this study, the emphasis is more firmly on the plays staged by professional acting companies in front of public audiences at purpose-built theatres, as it is through these texts and situations that the networks of agents (including dramatists, actors, impresarios, stationers, censors, and readers) involved in the development and transmission of the history play can be most readily detected.

Prologue

H: The plaies that they plaie in England, are not right comedies.

T: Yet they doo nothing else but plaie euery daye.

H: Yea but they are neither right comedies, nor right tragedies.

G: How would you name them then?

H: Representations of histories, without any decorum.

John Florio, *Florio's Second Fruits* (1591)

I would speak of a sort of participation without belonging – a taking part in without being part of, without having membership in a set.

Jacques Derrida, 'The Law of Genre' (1980)¹

Drawing on Florio's description, this study will show how dramatic 'representations of histories' occupied a prominent position in early modern theatre and as part of the publication of playbooks from repertory companies in England between 1583 and 1642, a period which frames the establishment of Queen Elizabeth's Men in 1583 (and the publication of the first professional plays in 1584), and the closing of the commercial theatres in 1642. However, as suggested by *Florio's Second Fruits*, precisely what constituted a dramatized 'history' in the period was demonstrably fluid, and in Florio's dialogue, it operates as an indeterminate, indecorous intermediary between comedy and tragedy. Departing from previous accounts which have assumed a degree of generic fixity through their selection of texts or the analysis they provide, this study will reposition the early modern history play as involving 'participation without belonging', and, in doing so, will highlight the polyvocality of the texts, paratexts, and the agents who have shaped their survival, presentation, and reception. This study will argue that an important way of understanding the position of history plays during the early modern period is to concentrate on the multiple participants or agents who have shaped the plays and their transmission. These production agents are not limited to the plays' dramatists, but include members of repertory companies, publishers, patrons, censoring

¹ *Florios Second Frvtes* (STC 11097, 1591), D4r; 'The Law of Genre', trans. by Avital Ronell, *Critical Inquiry*, 7:1 (1980), 55-81 (p.59).

authorities, audiences, and readers; together they can be seen as fashioning and renegotiating the position, parameters, and reception of history plays. While this approach can be pursued in relation to any play, it is particularly revealing for plays which dramatize the past, as they are often part of wider historiographical and political discourses that are propagated and controlled by some of the same production agents.

As a dramatic genre, the early modern 'history play' has attracted the sustained interest of critics from at least the mid-twentieth century, and most of these studies assigned some sense of generic fixity to the range of plays that are frequently described as histories. On the basis of patterns in critical attention, the early modern history play has come to be recognized as a dramatic category that predominantly features English monarchical history. Shakespeare's plays (as catalogued in the First Folio of 1623) occupy the central position in such accounts, and the genre is often described as declining in the early seventeenth century. As Paulina Kewes summarizes in relation to prevailing views of the Elizabethan history play, but equally reflects critical appraisals of early modern historical dramatizations more widely, the genre's most frequently cited features are 'its Englishness, its open-endedness, and its didacticism'.²

Among the earliest sustained studies of history plays that continue to be influential are E.M.W. Tillyard's *Shakespeare's History Plays* (1944) and Irving Ribner's *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (1957). Graham Holderness and David Bergeron suggest that 'all criticism of the histories emanates from E.M.W. Tillyard's pioneering work [...] whether one agrees or disagrees with it', and both Tillyard's and Ribner's studies have significantly shaped dominant patterns of critical engagement.³ Tillyard concentrates on Shakespeare's histories, their connection to historiographical materials, and their ideological positionings, aspects which feature prominently in subsequent studies (including those of the new historicists and

² 'The Elizabethan History Play: A True Genre?' in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works, Volume II: The Histories*, ed. by Richard Dutton and Jean Howard (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 170-93 (p.171).

³ David Bergeron, cited and discussed by Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare Recycled: The Making of Historical Drama* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p.21.

cultural materialists, who, given their critical emphases, have demonstrated considerable interest in historical dramatizations).⁴ As explored in his other works, including *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1943), Tillyard advocates a providential view of history, describing Shakespeare's Folio history plays as parables of natural and political order that culminate purposefully in the restoration of political stability through the inauguration of the Tudor dynasty, an interpretation that has been rightly connected to the political crises in Tillyard's Britain during the 1930s and 1940s, and which is also perceptible in the work of other critics from this period, including Lily B. Campbell's *Shakespeare's 'Histories': Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (1947). While later critics have departed from the nationalistic impetus of Tillyard's own work and reject interpreting the plays as univocal advocates of an official and conservative Tudor position (either asserting their universal qualities in a 'refusal of ideology' or their capacity to challenge and subvert Tudor orthodoxy, as Rackin summarizes), Tillyard's privileging of Shakespeare's histories over plays from other writers has shaped the parameters of later studies, as well as our wider understanding of early modern historical engagement.⁵ As F.J. Levy points out, even English historical writing during the mid-twentieth century was dominated by the work of Shakespearians, with an emphasis on English monarchical history determining the direction of historical inquiry.⁶ While Tillyard acknowledged the limitations he imposed on his account of historical drama, declaring his inability to outline and engage with the genre as a whole due to his narrow focus on Shakespeare, later critics furthered an exclusive association between Shakespeare and the history play. Robert Ornstein described Shakespeare as the genre's originator and F.P. Wilson declared that 'there is no certain evidence that any popular dramatist before Shakespeare wrote a play based on English history', which neglects the work of unattributed playwrights, such

⁴ Cf. Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Leonard Tennenhouse, *Power on Display* (London: Methuen, 1986); John Drakakis (ed.), *Alternative Shakespeares* (New York: Methuen, 1985); Phyllis Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles* (London: Routledge, 1990); and Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (eds.), *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).

⁵ Rackin, pp.40-42.

⁶ F.J. Levy, 'Afterword', *HLQ*, 68:1-2 (2005), 415-27, (pp.415-16).

as the authors of *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (1594) and *The Famous Victories of Henry V* (1598), both of which were first performed by Queen Elizabeth's Men during the 1580s and 1590s.⁷

While Ribner problematizes Tillyard's narrow focus on the historiography of Edward Hall and neglect of, for instance, the Machiavellian school of Italian humanist thought, his centralizing of historical sources and political interpretation of the plays and their 'embodiment of providential history' is similar to Tillyard's.⁸ Ribner views the history play as having a 'distinct political purpose' to support the right and political doctrine of the Tudors, 'to use the past for didactic purposes', and to promote nationalistic sentiment, features which resonate strongly with Tillyard's study.⁹ Both critics put forward a univocal interpretation of history plays, communicated through the dramatist's manipulation of historical materials, and overlook the role of additional agents in the production of historical drama. Ribner's approach is, however, distinctive from Tillyard's, both in its wider selection of history plays (consisting of a broad survey of a range of texts and dramatists) and its attempt to provide a specific definition of the genre, together with a narrative of its origins, development, and decline, an approach which has solidified the concept of the 'history play'. Ribner restricts himself to 'plays which deal with the history of England', admitting this selection is only 'one part of the historical drama of the age'; however, this imposed narrowing has been perpetuated and assumed by later critics, such as Benjamin Griffin, who adopts a similar structure in his study.¹⁰

⁷ E.M.W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (New York: Macmillan, 1944), pp.98-105; Robert Ornstein, *A Kingdom for a Stage* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972); F.P. Wilson, *Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), p.106.

⁸ Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p.12.

⁹ Ribner, pp.9-10.

¹⁰ Ribner, p.4; Benjamin Griffin, *Playing the Past: Approaches to English Historical Drama, 1385-1600* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2001).

While pursuing different approaches to issues of ideology and political discourse, new historicist and cultural materialist accounts of the history play are similar in their selection of texts and critical focus. Graham Holderness, Phyllis Rackin, Jonathan Dollimore, Alan Sinfield, and Stephen Greenblatt have furthered the emphasis on an author-orientated approach that privileges Shakespeare's role as the primary producer of the history play.¹¹ A tripartite focus on the playwright (Shakespeare), the writing and performative nature of history, and the political ideology of the period has emerged as a defining feature of history play criticism. In *Shakespeare Recycled: The Making of Historical Drama* (1992), Holderness aligns Shakespeare's history plays with developments in early modern historiography, identifying a 'pluralistic quality' to the plays that is both politically reactionary and progressive, and describing a shift from providential to humanist historical approaches that is reflected in the plays.¹² This assessment resonates with Rackin's view that Shakespeare's historical project is closely connected to the conflict between providential and Machiavellian theories of historical causation, explaining the decline of the genre in the early seventeenth century as a result of the establishment of history as 'an autonomous discipline with its own purposes and methods, clearly distinct from myth and literature', a view which ultimately ignores a considerable body of both dramatic and non-dramatic 'historical' works.¹³ Perhaps owing to the history play's connection, unlike other dramatic forms such as comedy and tragedy, to a discipline of inquiry, the genre is frequently explored in relation to historiographical developments. Critical accounts often privilege a progressive narrative of the genre that is aligned with precedents in historical accounts and methods, an approach which can be revealing but regularly ignores plays which do not fit within these historiographical patterns. In *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (1996), Ivo Kamps qualifies Rackin's position that the emergence of history as a defined discipline

¹¹ Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*; Rackin, *Stages of History*; Holderness, *Shakespeare Recycled*; Dollimore and Sinfield (eds.), *Political Shakespeare*; and 'History and Ideology: the instance of *Henry V*' in Drakakis (ed.), *Alternative Shakespeares*, pp.206-27.

¹² Holderness, p.128.

¹³ Rackin, p.19.

resulted in the decline of the dramatic genre to much later in the Stuart period (during the 1630s) and incorporates a wider range of historical dramatizations (as his title implies). However, he still perpetuates the narrative of generic decline in alignment with disciplinary innovations, which remains unrepresentative of the full spectrum of historical engagement witnessed during the early modern period.¹⁴

Twenty-first century studies have continued to draw on the patterns and emphases set out by earlier critics. In *Playing the Past: Approaches to English Historical Drama, 1385-1600* (2001), Benjamin Griffin presents a survey of the history play that is indebted to Ribner's study in its aims and structure, summarizing the main features of the history play in terms of its formlessness, open-endedness, and episodic nature, and arguing for the importance of generic classification, in contrast to post-structuralist scepticism concerning categorization. Griffin opens his study by suggesting the 'scholarly consensus' surrounding the identification of history plays is ultimately a 'mask of confusion', highlighting the uncertain position of plays on classical history, pre-history, foreign history, and citizen-orientated history, and providing an appendix that includes many of these previously excluded forms of historical drama.¹⁵ However, despite this suggestion of the genre's flexibility and indeterminacy, Griffin follows the patterns established by previous studies, concluding that the First Folio classification is sufficient to define the genre as plays concerned with English history and the affairs of the great, and supporting this position with selective reference to Thomas Heywood's discussion of 'domesticke hystories' in *An Apology for Actors* (1612), which constitutes only one part of Heywood's account of historical dramatizations.¹⁶

Griffin also perpetuates, as suggested by his title, the critical narrative of the history play's decline taking place in tandem with Shakespeare's dramatic output, describing the genre as

¹⁴ *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.1-25.

¹⁵ Griffin, pp.1, 148-57.

¹⁶ Griffin, pp.15-17. Thomas Heywood, *An apology for actors* (STC 13309, 1612), B4r.

having ‘died out in the 1600s’, and concluding his study by asserting the prominence of the *Elizabethan* history play during the sixteenth century, which he ascribes to the political and economic instabilities of the 1590s that dissipated with the accession of James I.¹⁷ This position depends upon a narrow categorization of historical dramatization, which in itself cannot be supported when examining publication patterns for these plays. As Griffin observes, a significant number of history plays were printed between 1598 and 1613, disclosing ‘an unsuspected Jacobean passion for the histories’; however, Griffin dismisses this development, claiming ‘this consideration of the tastes of the play-reading public does not contradict the view that the history play was “obsolete” after about 1600; it merely reminds us that whatever becomes obsolete for the retailer thereby becomes valuable for the antique-shop.’¹⁸ Griffin seems to suggest that history plays as playbooks are of limited interest and should be disassociated and marginalized from their performance existence, despite the fact that printed playbooks (shaped by agents and practices of production) constitute the main point of access to these plays in performance, and the interests of a play-reading public are an integral aspect of understanding early modern drama. Griffin assigns agency, prime involvement, and significance to theatrical companies, puzzlingly repositioning them as the ‘retailers’ of history plays, while the actual publishers and booksellers are denigrated to ‘antique shop[s]’, trading in obsolete goods.

More recent studies from Brian Walsh, Janette Dillon, and Ralf Hertel have explored, to varying degrees, the theatrical context of staging history, which is closer to my emphasis on the conditions of production during the period, recognizing history plays as both texts to be read and (partial) records of a performance event. In *Shakespeare, the Queen’s Men and the Elizabethan Performance of History* (2009), Walsh concentrates on repertory companies and their casting and staging practices, responding to Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean’s repertory study, *The Queen’s Men and their Plays* (discussed at length in Chapter 1), and

¹⁷ Griffin, p.145.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.144.

usefully highlighting a parallel between the performance of drama on stage and the writing of history, both of which are acts of retelling and reinvention. While Walsh prioritizes English historical drama, he departs from the ideologically positioned accounts of critics such as Tillyard, Greenblatt, and Holderness, as well as McMillin and MacLean's political emphasis, focusing instead on visual representations, theatrical spaces, and staging. Walsh tends to negate specific narratives of appropriation in favour of an acknowledgement of multiplicity in performance and the notion of *theatrum historiae* – that history is understood through the dynamics of the theatre and the generic vehicle of the history play – thus drawing attention to both the nature of theatrical production and the creation of historical accounts. Similarly, Dillon, in *Shakespeare and the Staging of English History* (2012), concentrates on the staging practices connected to early modern history plays, offering a departure from earlier studies that emphasize univocal political interpretations, and exploring the ways in which history can be variously performed and presented on stage in relation to the use of props, theatre spaces, and actors' bodies (while still retaining a focus on Shakespeare's English histories).

Hertel, as implied by his title, *Staging England in the Elizabethan History Play* (2014), and the claims of his introduction and conclusion, purports to provide an account of the Elizabethan history play that draws on performance considerations and criticism, an approach that is absent from the majority of the study, which explores the emergence of national consciousness in the early modern period through the issues dramatized in history plays. Hertel's account alternates between a generalized theoretical discussion of the concept of national identity and individual case studies of history plays, which, given his broader focus, are unhelpfully restricted to Shakespeare's histories and Marlowe's *Edward II*, continuing the narrow focus characteristic of most sustained accounts. As Richard Helgerson outlines, this dominance of Shakespeare has resulted in 'a considerable narrowing in our understanding of the variety of perspectives on the English past – and thus on the English nation – that were

available to Elizabethan theatregoers'.¹⁹ Indeed, with the exception of Walsh's and Dillon's studies, most critics continue to privilege the dramatist's position in conjunction with a singular ideological positioning, neglecting the influences of other agents of theatrical and textual production, and overlooking the variability of interpretation and presentation that is apparent when taking into account a range of users.

In summary, critical studies regularly present the early modern history play as a dramatic genre having a considerable degree of clarity and fixity, and mostly consisting of plays that engage with English monarchical history, with Shakespeare's Folio histories as the canonical representatives that serve to define and delineate the boundaries of the genre. As Kewes observes, most critics have propagated 'the myth that there is a definable dramatic genre called the history play, which is distinct from both comedy and tragedy, which features the "English" past, and which reaches its artistic maturity with Shakespeare, swiftly declining thereafter.'²⁰ However, claims for the history play's concentration in subject matter and source materials, its development trajectory (closely aligned with Shakespeare's dramatic output), and its formal characteristics, including assertions of open-endedness, constitute selective positionings that ignore other significant patterns, dramatists, and plays. This emphasis also perpetuates the assumption that extant playbooks are commensurate with the wider performance repertoires of theatrical companies (most of which are now lost), effacing the problem of archival absences in extrapolating generic parameters.

These predominant critical emphases could be supported if there were a strong evidentiary basis to suggest a consistent understanding of the history play in early modern England. However, such fixity cannot be claimed, and historical representations on stage, in manuscripts, and in printed playbooks reveal variable and shifting perspectives. Indeed, as

¹⁹ Richard Helgerson 'Shakespeare and Contemporary Dramatists of History' in *Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, ed. by Dutton and Howard, pp.26-47 (p.26).

²⁰ Kewes, 'Elizabethan History Play', p.187.

Samuel Johnson discussed when addressing the construction of Shakespeare's First Folio, 'the players, who in their edition divided our authour's works into comedies, histories, and tragedies, seem not to have distinguished the three kinds by any very exact or definite ideas [...] There is not much nearer approach to unity of action in the tragedy of *Antony and Cleopatra*, than in the history of *Richard the Second*. But a history might be continued through many plays; as it had no plan, it had no limits.'²¹ An absence of 'any very exact or definite ideas' in relation to the history play, both on stage and in print, can be witnessed throughout the period, yet no critical study has prioritized this fluidity and examined historical dramatizations as a series of shifting negotiations and appropriations on the part of a range of producers.

Instead, critical accounts have concentrated on fixing the genre and making assertions of definition, continuity, and a clear narrative trajectory, which represents a subsequent and retrospective critical apparatus. While such studies have been integral in exploring Shakespeare's 'histories' and English monarchical plays, many other texts and patterns of production have been overlooked. Playwrights such as George Peele, Robert Greene, Thomas Heywood, John Webster, and Philip Massinger, as well as the numerous contributions of anonymous dramatists who are even more widely neglected owing to a prevailing critical bias in favour of attributed texts, are routinely excluded from appraisals of the history play. Moreover, alternative dramatic histories, including foreign history, biblical history, classical history, and citizen-orientated history are regularly marginalized while the preference for English monarchical dramatizations is perpetuated, despite their interconnections and the similar dramatic, literary, and political utilities that are reflected in these more varied formal approaches and subject materials. For example, there are important topical, thematic, and repertorial parallels between the 'English' history play, *I Henry VI* (first published in 1623), and *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594), typically discussed as a 'foreign history'. Both plays were

²¹ Samuel Johnson, *Mr Johnson's Preface to his Edition of Shakespear's plays* (London: 1765), pp.xv-xvi.

probably performed by Lord Strange's Men during the early 1590s and, as will be considered in Chapter 1, the connections between these plays are routinely neglected through a critical privileging of Shakespeare and 'English' history. This classification is thoroughly complicated by these plays through the range of locations and characters they present: *I Henry VI* is partly set in France and features French historical figures, and *The Battle of Alcazar* involves a range of English people engaging in its central military conflict, set in Morocco.

Even though there is limited evidence to suggest that a consistent understanding of the history play circulated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, early modern writers did debate the position and purpose of history in both dramatic and non-dramatic texts. Playwrights, writers, publishers, patrons, and other agents of production negotiated the parameters of 'history' (either directly or more implicitly through the selection and presentation of their materials), exploring history's utility for furthering a variety of agendas, which were not necessarily singular, univocal, or easily distinguishable. For example, as F.J. Levy discusses, William Camden seems to announce to his readers the clear distinctions in his approach to two different works, producing 'a chorography in his *Britannia* and a history in his *Annals...of the Princesse Elizabeth*'; however, through the *Britannia*'s underlying irony and use of *paralepsis*, Camden ultimately dissipates the clear border he has claimed for history and antiquarianism.²² As will be considered in greater detail throughout this study, historiographical discourses from the period regularly draw attention to the importance of ideas of history and the past, while displaying a lack of specificity or an overarching consensus in outlining these parameters.

As our critical understanding of the history play has been fashioned by twentieth- and twenty-first-century accounts in which critics have deployed selective emphases, so has the wider evidentiary basis of early modern historical engagement been shaped by individuals and

²² Levy, pp.419-20.

networks displaying different agendas and means of control. This study, as implied by its title, will draw attention to the multiplicity of agents that have contributed to the development, transmission, and reception of the history play, demonstrating the importance of approaching dramatic genres by taking into account the participation and influence of different individuals, in preference to pursuing a singular generic identification. As opposed to eschewing or displacing generic considerations in the absence of a singular consensus, or claiming that the history play as a genre does not exist, this study affirms the importance of generic discussions in literary studies: authors, audiences, readers, and other producers regularly engage with questions of genre. Plays and non-dramatic texts depend upon an awareness of earlier patterns and expectations in their presentation (although these conventions are continually shifting and variable). Derrida's 'The Law of Genre', quoted in the epigraph to this introduction, provides a useful point of reference for the early modern history play as involving 'participation without belonging – a taking part in without being part of, without having membership in a set'. While asserting the importance of genre, Derrida draws attention to the impossibility of fixed definitions and generic membership, which are variously negotiated, both at the time of the text's production and throughout its reception history. As Derrida maintains, 'every text participates in one or several genres, there is no genreless text; there is always a genre and genres, yet such participation never amounts to belonging.'²³

Reassessing early modern ideas of 'history' and the 'history play'

Reflecting the ubiquity and fluidity of genre that Derrida identifies, the terms 'history' and 'history play' did not acquire a clear consistency in usage during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Indeed, the etymology of 'history' and its variants highlights this changeability and non-specificity: the *OED* demonstrates that from its first-recorded applications in English (as a borrowing from the Latin *historia* and Old French *istorie*), 'history' was variously used between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries (and beyond) to refer to an account of an

²³ Derrida, p.65.

individual's life (a usage common from the early twelfth century), a chronicle of events relating to a group of people or people in general (1155), a dramatic or pictorial representation of historical events (c.1240), a narrative of real or imaginary events (c.1462), and an investigation or inquiry into the knowledge of past events (twelfth century).²⁴ As suggested by its French origins, 'history' is closely connected to 'story' (a variant of *estoire*), and early uses of both terms are interchangeable in meaning. Indeed, the first-recorded references to 'story' in English are applied to descriptions of events that were believed to have taken place, incorporating historical records and chronicles.²⁵ The plurality of meanings current during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England reflects the continual negotiation that is central for an understanding of history, historiography, and the history play as they relate to representations of the past.

When the terms 'history' and 'historiography' are used to describe the past (which is the focus of this study), there is still little agreement in subject matter, range, purpose, method, form, or what constitutes 'the past' during the early modern period, a variability that in some important ways persists and is integral within modern historical discourses. As Paula Findlen explains, 'the problem with history was that it seemed to be filled with utterly contradictory statements about what historians ought to do with the past', with 'the past [being] far too variable and subtle a landscape for any single method or approach to prevail'.²⁶ Forms of engagement shift significantly throughout the period: historical debates and discussions of the past are presented in expansive chronicles (such as those associated with Polydore Vergil, Robert Fabyan, Richard Grafton, Raphael Holinshed, Edward Hall, John Stow, and William Camden), narrative prose accounts (for example, Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, 1579; Samuel Daniel's *The First Part of the History of England*, 1612; and Francis Bacon's *History of the Reign of King Henry the Seventh*, 1622), verse

²⁴ 'history, n', *OED*.

²⁵ 'story, n', *OED*.

²⁶ 'Historical Thought in the Renaissance', in *A Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. by Lloyd Kramer and Sarah Maza (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp.99-120 (pp.114, 117).

representations (including Daniel's *Civil Wars*, 1595-1609, Thomas May's translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, 1626-27, and Michael Drayton's *Battle of Agincourt*, 1627), and pamphlets (including the Protestant pamphlets of Thomas Scott during the 1620s), as well as a large number of plays. Considered collectively, such texts display great variety in subject and temporal focus, featuring recent as well as ancient accounts, and including a range of histories, involving English/British, European, classical, and legendary pasts, with some, such as Christopher Watson's translation of Polybius, incorporating classical and English histories within the same text.²⁷

A short selection of printed texts with their extended title-page descriptions highlights the formal, methodological, and temporal range regularly exhibited by writings about the past, indicating the conflation of different styles and approaches, even within the same text, as well as the importance of invention within such accounts: consider, for example, William Warner's *Albion's England*, a 'Historicall Map of the same Island [...] With Historicall Intermixtures, Inuention, and Varietie: proffitably, briefly, and pleasantly, performed in Verse and Prose' (1586); Thomas Heywood's *Troia Britannica: or Great Britain's Troy*, 'A Poem Devided into XVII several Cantons, intermixed with many pleasant Poeticall Tales', 'Concluding with an Universall Chronicle from the Creation, untill these present Times' (1609); and Christopher Brooke's *Ghost of Richard the Third*, 'Expressing himselfe in these three Parts: 1 His Character, 2 His Legend, 3 His Tragedie, Containing more of him then hath been heretofore shewed, either in Chronicles, Playes, or Poems' (1614).²⁸ Displaying a range of approaches and histories, these texts all engage with representations of the past, which complicates the identification of clear parameters for history and historiography, particularly when

²⁷ Watson's juxtaposition of classical and English histories is announced by the full title of his work: *The hystories of the most famous and worthy cronographer Polybius: discoursing of the warres betwixt the Romanes and Carthaginenses [...] Wherevnto is annexed an abstract, compendiously coercted out of the life and worthy acts, perpetrate by oure puissaunt prince king Henry the fift* (STC 20097, 1568), A1r.

²⁸ *Albions England* (STC 25079, 1586), a2r; *Troia Britanica* (STC 13366, 1609), A2r; *The Ghost of Richard the Third* (STC 3830, 1614), [leaf]2r.

considering the full spectrum of historical engagement, rather than its most discussed representatives. As Kewes observes, ‘more than any other form of writing, early modern works dealing with history promoted intertextual, cross-generic reading’, and recognizing ‘history’s hybrid generic status in the period’ is critical.²⁹ While discourses circulated on the writing of history (such as Thomas Blundeville’s *The true order and method of writing and reading histories*, 1574), no single methodological approach, form, or understanding of what constitutes a ‘history’ emerges as dominant during the early modern period. This lack of consensus encourages a critical approach that brings together a wide range of writings about the past and juxtaposes history plays with chronicles and pamphlet accounts. As Kewes asserts, ‘to recover the uses of the past in a variety of genres is essential for the understanding of early modern historical culture since, even if many of those genres are no longer recognized as history, early modern writers and readers treated them as such.’³⁰

One particularly prominent issue in delineating historical writing, which features in early modern historiographical accounts and is central to modern methodological principles, is the position and perception of historical accuracy. However, rather than suggesting a distinction between ‘history’ (as a record of the past) and other engagements with historical traditions that are more fictionalized, early modern discourses concerning truth and the role of invention in historiographical writing draw attention to the generic hybridity that Kewes identifies, encouraging a broader and more inclusive understanding of history as it relates to the past. In *A Defence of Poetry* (written and circulated in manuscript from the early 1580s, and printed in 1595), Philip Sidney debates the relative qualities and merits of poetry, history, and philosophy, drawing on a similar discourse in Aristotle’s *Poetics*. In his privileging of poetry above history and philosophy, Sidney claims that ‘the historian, wanting the precept, is so tied, not to what should be but to what is, to the particular truth of things and not to the general reason of things, that his example draweth no necessary consequence, and therefore a less

²⁹ ‘History and Its Uses: Introduction’, *HLQ*, 68:1-2 (2005), 1-31 (pp.5-6).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.5.

fruitful doctrine'.³¹ Sidney seems to suggest that history involves an adherence to 'truth' and past events as they occurred, which, shaped by his overarching agenda to prioritize poetry above other forms, he presents as a restrictive bond. However, this assumption of history's connection to 'the particular truth of things' is further clarified elsewhere in the *Defence*:

And even historiographers (although their lips sound of things done, and verity be written in their foreheads) have been glad to borrow both fashion and, perchance, weight of the poets. So Herodotus entitled his History by the name of the nine Muses; and both he and all the rest that followed him either stole or usurped of poetry their passionate describing of passions, the many particularities of battles, which no man could affirm; or, if that be denied me, long orations put in the mouths of great kings and captains, which it is certain they never pronounced.³²

Sidney recounts some of the practices of recent and classical historians whose writings encourage links between history and poetry, and which feature speeches, dialogues, and narratives that utilize the form and style of poetry, while also drawing on expectations of fictionality and invention. As observed in Sidney's discussion, historical engagement regularly involves the manipulation of events, individuals, and accounts to suit a particular purpose, and a survey of writings from the early modern period indicates that historical veracity (in a modern sense) cannot be pursued as a generic identifier or consistent methodological directive.

Indeed, throughout the period, claims for historical accuracy and truth often coexist with a recognition of the impossibility of certain knowledge and a desire to reshape accounts to heighten their application or exemplarity. While Abraham Fleming asserts in his address 'To the Readers studious in histories', prefacing the second volume of Holinshed's *Chronicles* (second edition, 1587), that 'histories are said to be the registers of memorie and the monuments of veritie', he also acknowledges that the past is always remote, evidence has been irretrievably lost, and historiographers are dependent upon narrative methods to arrive at what is ultimately a semblance of truth:

³¹ *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. by Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p.85.

³² *Miscellaneous*, p.75.

It is a toile without head or taile euen for extraordinarie wits, to correct the accounts of former ages so many hundred years receiued, out of vncerteinties to raise certeinties, and to reconcile writers dissenting in opinion and report. But as this is vnpossible, so is no more to be looked for than may be performed: and further to inquire as it is against reason, so to vndertake more than may commendable be atchiued, were fowle follie.³³

Fleming recognizes the impossibility of presenting a single account of the past and draws attention to the limits of historical inquiry, suggesting it is ‘against reason’ to look for ‘certeinties’, and instead highlighting the processes of estimation and creation that are integral in writing about the past.

Similarly, the persistence of legendary historical traditions, including accounts of Britain’s Trojan origins from Brutus, the great-grandson of Aeneas (introduced in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae* in the twelfth century) indicates their continuing importance within historical discussions, despite the regular challenging of this originary narrative following the publication of Polydore Vergil’s *Anglica Historia* (1534). While critics (including Rackin) have suggested that Britain’s legendary past had been discredited by the early seventeenth century, historians continued to incorporate such accounts into their writings, especially following James I’s consistent use of legendary figures as a means of legitimizing his reign and policies (as will be discussed in Chapter 3). In *A memorial of all the English monarchs* (first published in 1622), John Taylor includes legendary British monarchs in his history and, in the text’s second and expanded edition in 1630, he draws direct attention to the partiality of historical writing, both in terms of extant evidence and the choices and motivations of historians:

I follow the common opinion: for many Writers doe neither write or allow of Brutes being here, accounting it a dishonor for our Nation, to haue originall from a Paricide, and one that deriued his descent from the Goddesse (alias strumpet) Venus. Howsoeuer, Histories are obscured and clouded with ambiguities, some burnt, lost, defaced by antiquity; and some abused by the malice, ignorance, or partialitie of Writers, so that truth is hard to be found. Amongst all which variations of Times and Writers, I must conclude there was a BRVTE.³⁴

³³ Fleming in Raphael Holinshed, *The First and second volumes of Chronicles* (STC 13569: 1587), II, no sig.

³⁴ *A memorial of all the English monarchs* (STC 23774, 1630), A5v.

As can be seen from these examples, the question of truth and accuracy in historical accounts remained a challenging issue throughout the period (as it still is in modern historiography), and writers, including Francis Bacon, who called the study of antiquities ‘imperfect history’, acknowledged the uncertainty, creativity, and exemplarity of historical writing, which is ultimately ‘clouded with ambiguities’, as Taylor describes.³⁵ Rather than appearing as an autonomous discipline with clear methodological directives, the writing of history is varied and generically hybrid, and does not consistently privilege a particular approach, making the evaluation of a range of different engagements essential in understanding how the past was explored, and highlighting the important position of drama within this discourse. Moreover, as suggested by patterns in non-dramatic writing, the history play cannot be defined and assessed on the basis of historical accuracy, although recent criticism has tended to neglect dramatic representatives that are less firmly connected to an accepted historical past (in a modern sense), such as those plays dealing with early British history, including *Locrine* (1595), *Nobody and Somebody* (1606), and *King Lear* (1608). A survey of non-dramatic histories shows how central such traditions were within wider historiographical discourses.

This sense of varied participation that suggests an overarching generic indeterminacy or elusiveness can be witnessed in more detail when concentrating on early modern discourses concerning the history play, as well as a brief survey of plays from the professional theatres. In *A Survey of London* (1598), John Stow describes the theatrical offerings available in London as including ‘Comedies, Tragedies, enterludes, and histories, both true and fayned’, which implies a generic distinction, but provides no firm sense of history’s parameters or expectations.³⁶ Stow differentiates between dramatizations that have a certain degree of historical veracity and those that are imagined or distorted, and have a tenuous connection to a recognized past. He, nevertheless, includes both forms of representation within the category of ‘history’, which suggests a parallel with some of the previously cited discourses from

³⁵ Quoted in Findlen, p.114.

³⁶ *A survey of London* (STC 23341, 1598), F3r.

Sidney, Fleming, and Taylor. Similarly, the extract from *Florio's Second Fruits*, quoted at the beginning of this introduction, draws attention to contemporary interest in generic classification and prescription, while again remaining tantalizingly elusive. The characters in Florio's dialogue seem concerned with generic purity, claiming the professional theatres do not present 'right comedies' or 'right tragedies', and instead describing the daily theatrical offerings as 'representations of histories, without any decorum'.³⁷ Generic distinctions and expectations are assumed, but lack any sense of specificity: in the characters' dialogue, histories seem to occupy a more liminal position in terms of generic purity and decorum, accommodating greater variety and flexibility than comedy or tragedy, but no further indication of subject, style, or form is suggested.

Florio's dialogue is a useful exemplum, positioning dramatic genre as part of an early modern discourse that is often motivated by purposes other than the elucidation of generic parameters. It contributes to a pattern of fluidity in classification and fixity in interest, which is characteristic of the period. Taken as a whole, *Florio's Second Fruits* constitutes a manual for teaching Italian, containing English and Italian dialogues in two columns, with this discussion of dramatic genre also presented in Italian. Florio's short dialogue on genre, therefore, is part of a wider project of language teaching and the development of colloquial, conversational skills, rather than engaging primarily with the consideration and consolidation of dramatic categories. In these genre passages, Florio was likely influenced by Sidney's *Defence of Poetry* and its striking parallel exploration of 'right comedies' and 'right tragedies', offering the alternative conclusion that the stage presents a 'mongrel tragi-comedy', an assessment that reflects Sidney's particular agenda in the *Defence*, and which, as with Florio, is not primarily the examination of dramatic genres.³⁸ The exchange and correspondences between these texts reveal the varying motivations underlying generic discourses, suggesting that genre involves a range of shifting perspectives, rather than achieving the fixity of a local

³⁷ Florio, D4r.

³⁸ Sidney, *Miscellaneous*, p.114.

habitation and a name. Indeed, this example also points to a network of literary exchange on the issue of genre: it is likely that Florio used a manuscript version of Sidney's *Defence*, which, although it was not printed until 1595, was written during the 1580s.³⁹ Florio's *Second Fruits* reached print in 1591, but, given the earlier composition of Sidney's *Defence* and Florio's connections to the Sidney circle and his possible role as the 'ouer-seer' of the *Arcadia* in 1590, it is probable that Florio's genre discussion was influenced by Sidney.⁴⁰ Genre therefore emerges as a prevalent discourse, involving interconnected networks of agents, reflecting a variety of interests, and being characterized by fluidity in approach and proposed parameters.

This tripartite pattern can be detected throughout the period, as in Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (written c.1608, published 1612). This text provides an extended discussion of the history play as part of Heywood's defence of the theatre and positions it as a recognizable theatrical genre with classical (and legendary) origins:

I will begin with the antiquity of Acting Comedies, Tragedies, and Hystories [...] In the first of the Olimpiads, amongst many other actiue exercises in which Hercules ever triumph'd as victor, there was in his nonage presented vnto him by his Tutor in the fashion of a History, acted by the choyse of the nobility of Greece, the worthy and memorable acts of his father Iupiter. Which being personated with liuely and well-spirited action, wrought such impression in his noble thoughts, that in mere emulation of his fathers valor [...] he perform'd his twelue labours.⁴¹

Heywood presents the history play as a distinct genre involving the worthy and memorable acts of individuals from the past, but, again, further clarifying the genre's conventions and parameters proves problematic. Heywood incorporates mythological subjects, which can be presented 'in the fashion of a History', into his discussion, suggesting, as with other writers, that a separation on the basis of historical veracity is not integral to the writing of histories. As the *Apology* continues, Heywood offers additional accounts and lists of history plays, all

³⁹ For the composition date of Sidney's *Defence*, see Henry Woudhuysen, 'Sidney, Sir Philip (1554-1586)', *ODNB*.

⁴⁰ Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembrokes Arcadia* (STC 22539, 1590), A4v. See Margaret Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp.73-74.

⁴¹ Heywood, *Apology*, B3r.

of which draw attention to different kinds of history and emphasize the genre's lack of fixity. Furthering the classificatory tension detected in Stow and Florio, Heywood separately discusses 'our domesticke hystories' (including dramatizations of *Edward III* and *Henry V*) and 'forreigne History' (involving 'the liues of Romans, Grecians, or others'), which proposes both a distinction as well as an inclusive incorporation of different representations and perceptions of the past.⁴² If any overarching consensus can be claimed from the *Apology*, the history play emerges as a dramatic category that is debated and adapted to suit a variety of purposes, but for which no clear delineation can be proposed beyond the awareness that such plays habitually engage with some recognizable past, whether native or foreign, true or feigned, recent or deriving from ancient or legendary history.

This classificatory uncertainty can be witnessed in the use of the term 'history' as part of playbook title pages, Stationers' Register entries, and other account books and records, including Henslowe's *Diary* and licences from the Master of the Revels. An eclectic range of plays are described as 'histories' on their title pages, which complicates any sense of generic or terminological specificity and draws attention to the use of 'history' as synonymous with 'story': *The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594), *The Pleasant History of the Two Angry Women of Abingdon* (1599), *The Most Excellent History of the Merchant of Venice* (1600), *The Tragical History of Hamlet* (1603), *The True Chronicle History of the Life and Death of King Lear* (1608), and *The History of the Two Maids of More-Clacke* (1609) all incorporate 'history' in their title-page designations. As Griffin observes, in the Elizabethan revels accounts after 1571, 'the word *history* is indiscriminately applied to any kind of dramatic show', as evidenced by the occasions on which the court recorder was clearly unaware of the title of a performed play and wrote only 'the history of' in the account book, leaving the remainder of the line blank.⁴³ Several of Shakespeare's Folio histories were initially issued as 'tragedies' in their early quarto editions and Stationers' Register entries,

⁴² *Ibid.*, B4r, F3v.

⁴³ Griffin, p.10.

including *3 Henry VI* (as *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* in 1594), *Richard III* (as *The Tragedy of Richard the Third* in 1597), and *Richard II* (as *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second* in 1597). The early texts of *Richard III* offer a particularly useful example of the flexibility of classificatory labels: the quarto editions present the play as a ‘tragedy’, the Folio’s contents page places the play within the ‘Histories’ section, and the Folio’s head title and running title describe the play as ‘The Life and Death of Richard the Third’, which emphasizes Richard’s central position within the history. Despite the significance of the Folio’s classifications in recent criticism, its publication did not encourage more specific referents to genre after 1623: plays such as *The Costly Whore* (1633) and *The Great Duke of Florence* (1636) were subsequently described as ‘Comicall historie[s]’ on their title pages.

The prominence of generic designations and their ultimate indeterminacy are also explored within the texts of extant plays. One of the most sustained investigations into genre is dramatized in *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599), which presents ‘history’ as a character on stage. This anonymous play from the Chamberlain’s Men, written between 1596 and 1599 and published by William Aspley in 1599, offers a citizen-orientated history, dramatizing the relatively recent murder of a London merchant, George Sanders, in 1573, and including an induction involving the interaction of three characters, ‘Tragedie’, ‘Comedie’, and ‘Hystorie’.⁴⁴ In this scene, ‘Hystorie’ is presented with the attributes of a ‘Drum and Ensigne’, suggesting the dominance of battles and military subject matter. However, the induction progressively elides the distinctions between the three personified genres. Tragedie is initially presented with a whip and a knife, and identified with stories of revenge, murder, violence, and punishment, while Comedie favours material that is ‘but slight and childish’ (A2v). As the induction continues, the personified abstractions appear to overlap, and descriptions of Tragedie merge with features common to Hystorie, with its emphasis on monarchical battles and concerns of state, as suggested by its attributes. The following extract, provided as a

⁴⁴ *A warning for faire women* (STC 25089, 1599), A2r. Further references are given after quotations.

description of Tragedie, recalls plays such as *Richard III*, which permeate both categories, offering representations of murder, revenge, ghosts, and violence, alongside monarchical histories and military action:

Now some damnd tyrant to obtaine a crowne,
Stabs, hangs, impoysons, smothers, cutteth throats,
And then a Chorus too comes howling in,
And tels vs of the worrying of a cat,
Then of a filthie whining ghost,
Lapt in some fowle sheete, or a leather pelch. [A2v]

Indeed, when Tragedie is declared the victorious form on this occasion, the following description of its ensuing performance highlights such notable features as the play's historical basis and notoriety with contemporary audiences, drawing attention to its connection with the concerns and attributes of Hystorie:

My Sceane is London, natiue and your owne,
I sigh to thinke, my subiect too well knowne,
I am not faind: many now in this round,
Once to behold me in sad teares were drownd. [A3r-v]

With the play's induction exploring the flexibility of theatrical genres, *A Warning for Fair Women* engages with contemporary discourses concerning the prominence and yet indeterminacy of 'history', aspects which could have been further highlighted during performance through doubling practices. The actors playing the parts of Comedie, Hystorie, and Tragedie would have reappeared in other roles within the main play, symbolically reflecting the incorporation of different dramatic genres within a single play. Although doubling was a regular theatrical convention that audiences may have ignored, the induction involving three personified genres in *A Warning for Fair Women* is unique in early modern drama and encourages an awareness of the interpretative significance of doubling practices.

In offering a reappraisal of the early modern history play, this study will draw significantly on theatre history and bibliographic criticism, an approach which has been neglected in recent studies, but which will concentrate attention on the plurality of producers involved in the negotiation of genre. The importance of such criticism for this study is clear: the works of Tiffany Stern and Roslyn Knutson, for example, highlight the range of individuals taking part

in the creation and transmission of a play, together with its multiple and continually evolving states of existence.⁴⁵ As Stern demonstrates in *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (2009), a single play is variously acted upon by players, prompters, scribes, and authorities, and disseminated into separate actors' parts. The text produced in the printing house, originating from the main copy script and the additional documents that may have accompanied it, including prologues, epilogues, letters, and songs, shows the traces of different 'producers' and dislocated texts, which have important implications for understanding early modern staging practices and publication.⁴⁶ This approach, however, has not been applied to a sustained reconsideration of a group of plays, with the possible exceptions of Walsh's study, discussed previously. In the case of history plays, an awareness of the different agents involved in their production problematizes studies that focus on these plays as created primarily through the dramatist's engagement with political, historical, and ideological issues, as doing so insufficiently addresses the material conditions of production.

Similarly, critics such as Peter Blayney, Alan Farmer, Zachary Lesser, Sonia Massai, Lukas Erne, and Marta Straznicky have demonstrated that printers, publishers, and booksellers played a significant role in the selection, survival, and presentation of plays in a printed form, and were motivated by a variety of political, literary, and economic factors, which cannot be reasonably dismissed or derogated as destructive.⁴⁷ In relation to new historicist critics and

⁴⁵ Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) and 'Repatching the Play' in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (London: Palgrave, 2004), pp.151-77; Roslyn Knutson, *The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company, 1594-1613* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991) and *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁴⁶ Stern, *Documents*, pp.1-7.

⁴⁷ Peter Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks' in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 383-422; Alan Farmer and Zachary Lesser, 'The Popularity of Playbooks Revisited', *SQ*, 56:1 (2005), 1-32; Zachary Lesser, *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication: Readings in the English Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Sonia Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Marta Straznicky (ed.), *The Book of the Play: Playwrights, Stationers, and Readers in Early Modern England* (Amherst, Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), and *Shakespeare's Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

their emphasis on the politics of early modern drama (especially prominent in their discussions of history plays), Straznicky observes that ‘it is all the more striking that the reception of early modern *printed* drama, not to mention manuscript drama, has been almost completely overlooked’, while Lesser argues that ‘early modern publishers inevitably transformed the meanings of plays through publication, reading them in the contexts of their own publishing specialities and their own historical moment, contexts that may have differed radically from those in which the plays were written and performed’.⁴⁸ In addressing the changing position of historical drama, this study will prioritize these agents of stage and page, together with the methodologies of performance and bibliographic criticism. As Julie Stone Peters highlights, the institutions of printing and the theatre ‘grew up together’ and by the end of the sixteenth century, ‘drama was understood to play itself out in [these] two arenas’, forming an important dual emphasis for this study.⁴⁹

By uniting these approaches in a sustained examination of the history play, this study will offer an alternative perspective on historical dramatizations on stage and in print, concentrating attention on the material conditions of theatrical and textual production through a series of five chronological case studies. A central aim of this study is to differentiate between print and performance contexts, which will assist in addressing issues such as play survival, and to emphasize that most extant representatives of history plays are printed playbooks that have close ties to non-dramatic texts and wider patterns of publication and readership. As opposed to focusing solely on plays, this study will, as Kewes suggests, ‘regard historical drama as one among a number of ways in which a society saturated in history, and turning to it instinctively to interpret the present, looked to the theatre for both instruction and entertainment’, an application which is, however, ‘decisively mediated by the culture of print’, as Marta Straznicky describes.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Straznicky, *Book of the Play*, p.4; Lesser, *Politics of Publication*, pp.20-21.

⁴⁹ *Theatre of the Book, 1480-1880: Print, Text and Performance in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp.4-5, 8.

⁵⁰ Kewes, ‘Elizabethan History Play’, p.189; Marta Straznicky, *Book of the Play*, p.4.

Defining the history play and the agency of its producers

This study is interested in how the past and ideas of what constitutes the past were explored on stage and re-presented in print, and it uses the evidence of wide-ranging representations in historiographical and dramatic accounts to put forward a more inclusive definition of the ‘history play’ than previous studies have offered. The examples set out in the introduction draw attention to the varied meanings and applications of the term ‘history’ and to the vast range of subject materials that are brought together in writing about the past. As a result, this study will consider as a history play any dramatic text that engages with a recognizable past, regardless of whether this past is English/British or ‘foreign’, ancient or recent, closely following the evidence of primary documents and factually accurate accounts of a particular past or drawing more significantly on legendary traditions. As Kewes proposes, ‘if we want to understand the place and uses of history in early modern drama, we should be willing to consider any play, irrespective of its formal shape or fictional element, which represents, or purports to represent, a historical past’.⁵¹ Of course, outlining precisely what constitutes a recognizable past is conceptually complex and the answer suggested by this study (and presented more comprehensively through Appendix A, which provides a list of plays) is by no means definitive. In this study, plays are said to be dramatizing a recognizable past if their characters or events can be found in other written sources and have at one time been thought to have existed or taken place. This study will include, for example, plays based on legendary British history, such as *Locrine* (1595), as these histories feature in chronicle accounts and were an important part of historiographical debates during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (as shown by this introduction and discussed at length in Chapter 3). It will also include plays based on biblical histories, plays that dramatize popular figures such as Robin Hood and his followers (who were featured in accounts such as John Leland’s *Itinerary*, [c.1540]), and plays that signal their representation of real people and events through an allegorical design, such as *A Game at Chess* (see Chapter 4). Although it could be argued that

⁵¹ Kewes, ‘Elizabethan History Play’, p.188.

all plays dramatize some sort of past, whether ‘true or feigned’, this study will *not* consider as a ‘history’ those plays which show few signs of being connected to an identifiable historical tradition. It will not incorporate plays merely set *in* the past as histories, or those which evoke a specific location and time, but are not associated with other external sources or traditions that suggest the events were once regarded as part of a common past. For example, *Clyomon and Clamydes* (1599), which is nominally set during the reign of Alexander the Great, is not included because the events and characters that are featured are nowhere else linked to a specific narrative of the past. Similarly, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602) is not considered a history play; although the play takes place during the reign of Henry IV and features some of the characters (including Falstaff) from Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* plays, the events that are dramatized do not connect to a recognizable historical narrative corroborated by another source.

As is evident, this classification prioritizes subject matter above considerations of form, style, ideology, or the use of the designation ‘history’ and its variants on title pages. Form, style, and ideological motivations vary widely within both dramatic and non-dramatic accounts, so as to make classification on these grounds limiting and unrepresentative.⁵² The term ‘history’, as it appears on title pages, had different meanings depending on the nature and presentation of the text, and not all of its uses relate to accounts of the past, which is the focus of this study. By adopting a subject-led approach, this study will bring together English monarchical histories, classical histories, biblical histories, citizen-orientated histories, recent histories, and legendary histories. It will show how plays dramatizing diverse pasts, such as *King Lear* (1608) and *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1 1605; Part 2 1606), are connected and why this broader definition of the history play is important. Throughout the five case studies, further justifications for this encompassing classification will be provided, which will draw on the evidence of early modern historiographical practices and developments,

⁵² See Kewes, ‘Elizabethan History Play’, pp.170-93.

performance repertoires, publishers' outputs, and the accounts and responses of patrons and censors (such as William Herbert in Chapter 4, and Henry Herbert in Chapter 5). By using these selected parameters, this study will argue that a broader critical conception of the history play helps to reveal connections between plays, performance repertoires, and printed books – connections that were recognized by their agents of production and used to pursue particular agendas in performance and publication.

A comprehensive survey of extant plays from 1584 to 1642 was conducted in order to define the parameters of the genre and to select the main case studies for examination. Each extant play was evaluated individually and a series of charts was produced that outline a corpus of 'history plays' for the period. One of these charts, which concentrates on printed editions of history plays, is presented as Appendix A and makes apparent this study's central emphasis on the conditions of textual production and the publication of professional history plays. As discussed throughout this introduction, a central aim of this study is to challenge the parameters of the 'history play' as a critical concept and the dominant methodologies used to evaluate the genre by repositioning the history play as a series of local exchanges involving different agents of production and through which a range of readings can be witnessed. Extant printed plays are the main source of evidence for this re-evaluation and as a result, this study concentrates primarily on the history play as a playbook. Manuscript plays, such as *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* (1619) and *Believe as You List* (1630), will also be considered, but the main evidence for the genre survives in printed playbooks, which reveals how important publication practices and motivations are in evaluating dramatic representations of the past and understanding their reception and transmission. Appendix A lists these playbook editions, starting in 1584 with the publication of the first professional plays, and records the companies, printers, publishers, and booksellers associated with each new edition until 1642. This primary data was used to select most of the case studies: by using the number of history play editions per year to generate several publication graphs (including one concentrating on first editions, and another featuring first and subsequent editions), a series of peaks and troughs in

history play publication was detected. The selected case studies mostly correspond to the main publication peaks suggested by the graphs. These peak periods, of on average four to six years in duration, were further analysed to identify patterns in publishers, theatrical companies, dramatists, and patrons, and to compare these to the evidence for company repertoires during these periods (including both lost and manuscript plays). This analysis revealed that, within each peak period, a specific group of production agents was often responsible for a significant proportion of that peak's history plays, suggesting that local networks of companies, publishers, and patrons contributed measurably to the transmission and reception of the history play, and indicating that a synchronic examination of these agents and peak periods of production would have important implications for understanding the position of historical dramatizations during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Drawing on these findings, Chapter 1 will concentrate on some of the earliest printed representatives of history plays between 1590 and 1594, introducing a publication network involving Queen Elizabeth's Men and the stationers Thomas Creede and William Barley. It will highlight the agency of these individuals in fostering an image of the company's repertory, as well as the importance of playbook paratexts in positioning a text and the characteristics of the emerging readerly market for professional plays. Chapter 2 will concentrate on a patronage network involving Andrew Wise, George Carey, second Baron Hunsdon, and the Chamberlain's Men between 1597 and 1603, showing how this overlooked network has shaped the publication of Shakespeare's English monarchical histories, together with critical narratives of the history play. This chapter will also consider the importance of the physical geography of the London book trade in influencing the selection and presentation of plays for publication. Chapter 3 will focus on the publishing strategies of Nathaniel Butter, an important stationer for the entire period and one whose publications are closely attuned to the historiographical strategies of the early Jacobean court between 1605 and 1609, as well as to the economic potential of patronage connections with young nobleman, including Philip Herbert, earl of Montgomery. Chapter 4 draws attention to the centrality of the King's Men

and the Herbert family in shaping the history play between 1619 and 1625; this period prioritizes recent history and marks the beginning of a shift in the central agents involved in the book trade, as companies, patrons, and impresarios started to occupy prominent roles in play publication. Finally, Chapter 5 will consider evidence for the further fragmentation, during the 1630s, of the previously dominant agents of playbook production, examining history plays in performance and publication as engaging with a wide range of different pasts and involved in notable moments of censorship in the decade before the Civil War.

Together these case studies indicate the continuing importance and utility of history plays during the period, showing how historical dramatizations can be positioned within networks of production that reveal the interest and involvement of different agents who read and appropriated the plays in a variety of ways. In particular, these local, synchronic engagements highlight the political valencies of historical dramatizations during the period. However, as indicated by the preceding methodology, these case studies do not provide a comprehensive analysis of early modern history plays. They are symptomatic of some patterns and developments in historical dramatizations, but they more closely correspond to networks of significant production agents who were responsible for the transmission of particular history plays. This emphasis means that some plays which might be expected to occupy an important position within a study of early modern history plays are given less attention. For example, Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* (1605) is not featured within the case studies because the individuals involved in its publication (including George Eld and Thomas Thorpe) do not fit within one of the larger production networks under examination and identified through the study's initial quantitative analysis. *Sejanus* is, of course, included in Appendix A, but the main case studies are connected to the evidence of production networks, rather than offering a comprehensive survey of history plays throughout the period, or concentrating on prominent dramatists and their plays.

The result is a study that focuses on the often-overlooked agents of production (primarily, theatrical companies, patrons, and stationers) and brings together a range of anonymous and attributed plays that dramatize a variety of histories. It demonstrates the connections between diverse plays, such as *Selimus* (1594) and *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (1594), by showing how they fit into production networks (in this case, a network involving stationer Thomas Creede and the Queen's Men) and by examining the evidence for synchronic readings that suggest how these plays were used, transmitted, and received at points of peak production between 1584 and 1642.

One of the main sources of evidence for evaluating how plays were interpreted and used by their agents of production can be found in the paratexts that accompany printed plays; consequently, evaluations of these materials will feature prominently throughout the case studies. Gérard Genette developed the term 'paratext' in 1969, describing it as 'the means by which a text makes a book of itself and proposes itself as such to its readers, and more generally to the public.'⁵³ In this study, the term will be used to refer to the textual features that often surround the main play, specifically the title pages, dedicatory epistles, addresses to readers, commendatory verses, colophons, and actor and character lists. These materials, which, to adapt Genette's description, turn plays into playbooks, also put forward readings of the plays. As will be considered throughout this study, prefatory addresses and title-page descriptions frequently comment directly on a play's content, and this connection makes paratexts an invaluable source of evidence for understanding how certain agents of production read, positioned, and marketed history plays.

It is not always clear, however, who was responsible for the composition of paratexts, and this issue will be taken up throughout the study. Dedications and addresses are usually attributed

⁵³ See Gérard Genette, 'Introduction to the Paratext', trans. by Marie Maclean, *New Literary History*, 22 (1991), 261-72. Genette also distinguished between 'peritext' (the elements that surround the actual text in the same volume) and 'epitext' (the 'messages' that are situated outside the book, including relevant letters, correspondence, and interviews).

in print to particular individuals, often the play's dramatists or publishers. In contrast, title pages represent a site of multiple agency and authorship, where the contributions of dramatists, theatrical companies, and stationers can be detected. The legal rights to publish texts and oversee their presentation resided with stationers and the Stationers' Company (which was incorporated in 1557). Decisions relating to title-page descriptions, *mise en page*, and attributions to dramatists and companies were largely under the stationers' control. Farmer and Lesser take this position in their study of playbook title pages ('Vile Arts: The Marketing of English Printed Drama'), claiming that the 'responsibility for designing a book's title page typically fell to its publisher'.⁵⁴ However, Stern has argued for the involvement of dramatists and theatrical companies in the composition of title pages, suggesting that title pages resembled the playbills that were used to advertise performances.⁵⁵ These different possibilities show that determining agency in the composition of title pages is by no means straightforward and plays should be considered on a case-by-case basis. This study will regularly use playbook title pages to evaluate how a particular history play is being positioned for readers through its descriptive content and attributions, and, in each case, an assessment of paratextual responsibility will be included.

The question of who is responsible for the composition of paratexts raises the broader question of who has the ability to act as a play's agent, and, similarly, there is no single or consistent answer. While a play's dramatist(s) can be described as (mostly) responsible for the main text, they are not necessarily the main agents involved in the transmission of the manuscript into a printed book. Some playwrights, such as Ben Jonson, clearly did oversee the publication of their plays, often discussing this process through accompanying paratextual materials, as in Jonson's *Sejanus* (in his address 'To the Readers', 1605) and *The Alchemist* (in his dedication to Lady Mary Wroth, 1612). Most professional dramatists were not, however,

⁵⁴ Alan Farmer and Zachary Lesser, 'Vile Arts: The Marketing of English Printed Drama, 1512-1660', *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, 39 (2000), 77-65 (p.78).

⁵⁵ Stern, "'On each Wall and Corner Post": Playbills, Title-pages, and Advertising in Early Modern London', *English Literary Renaissance*, 36:1 (2006), 57-89.

closely involved in the publication of their work. As revealed by surviving records, such as *Henslowe's Diary*, companies, managers, and impresarios purchased playscripts from dramatists, and playbooks became part of a company's assets, which could be bought and sold. Publication privileges resided with stationers, rather than with the plays' dramatists. When a stationer entered a play into the Stationers' Register, he or she secured the rights to publish that text, as well as future texts bearing a similar title or subject.⁵⁶ As specified by the terms of the Company's incorporation in 1557, writers could not enter their works in the Register or hold copyright privileges.⁵⁷ Some writers objected to the 'unauthorized' publication of their works, including Thomas Heywood (discussed in Chapter 3). Nevertheless, publication remained the privilege of stationers, and the structure and organization of the Stationers' Company protected their interests. For this reason, the publication, survival, and reception of plays from the professional theatres owes much to the interests and strategies of stationers, who were responsible for selecting, investing in, and marketing a significant proportion of the extant plays from the period. This study of history plays will concentrate on stationers, because their actions and marketing strategies offer useful case studies in how historical dramas were interpreted and received, and in the connections between diverse representations of the past.

In particular, this study will focus on the publishers of history plays. Stationers generally referred to themselves as either printers (responsible for producing the material text) or booksellers (responsible for selling the text); as Blayney observes, 'the early modern book trade had no separate word for what we now call a publisher', because 'publishing was not usually thought of as a profession'.⁵⁸ However, it is possible and, indeed, essential, for modern critics to identify the stationer who caused a particular text to be printed by investing in it and therefore acted as the text's publisher. This identification is often made possible by entries in

⁵⁶ Blayney, 'Publication', p.399.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.394-98.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.391.

the Stationers' Register (where the rights to a particular title were assigned to specific stationers) and/or the texts' imprints (which provide publication details). For example, the imprint to the 1597 edition of *Richard II* reveals that the play was 'Printed by Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise', which indicates that Simmes printed the text and Wise acted as the publisher, and is further corroborated by the Stationers' Register entry to Wise (dated 29 August 1597).⁵⁹

Because they carried the financial risk of the investment, publishers probably exerted the greatest influence on a text's presentation in print (including the incorporation of paratexts). The role of publisher was usually taken on by booksellers (including, as this study will consider, Wise and Nathaniel Butter), rather than printers (such as Simmes). Indeed, this study will not examine the trade printers of history plays, as they were usually hired by other stationers to manufacture the material texts and probably had limited input on the selection and presentation of the plays because it was not their investment. As Blayney argues, 'if our concern is the source of the manuscript, the reasons why *that* play was published *then*, or the supposed attitude of the players or the playwright to the fact of publication, we must focus not on the printer but on the publisher'.⁶⁰ However, some printers did occasionally act as publishers, including Thomas Creede and John Danter, and this variation in their role is often indicated by imprints and entries in the Register. These instances will be considered in the relevant chapters (particularly Chapter 1), and this study will argue that an understanding of stationers' marketing strategies and agency can be most securely reached when their *published* output is assessed (rather than their published and printed outputs).

While this study will concentrate on the publication of history plays and how this process of transmission draws attention to specific readings and applications, it will also consider the history play on stage. Indeed, one of the central arguments of this thesis is that patterns in

⁵⁹ William Shakespeare, *Richard the second* (STC 22307, 1597), A1r.

⁶⁰ Blayney, 'Publication', p.391.

performance and publication are not necessarily comparable and that discussions of genre, theatrical repertoires, and early modern drama, more broadly, need to be alert to the complications that arise from conflating evidence for performance and publication. As discussed in Chapter 2, for example, the considerable number of English monarchical history plays which were published between 1597 and 1600 creates a very specific idea of what characterizes historical dramatizations at the end of the sixteenth century; these print patterns contrast significantly with records of performance repertoires, which present a more varied picture. This study will argue that performance and publication are separate processes and that any attempt at extrapolating patterns needs to be aware of the differences between them, an approach that makes full use of surviving records and documents, and reveals how diverse and wide-ranging history plays are in their subjects, forms, applications, and transmission. In examining the history play as a performance and print genre, this study does not, however, attempt to offer a comprehensive overview of the history play on stage. It will evaluate evidence for performance patterns and incorporate discussions of repertory companies, impresarios, and theatrical patrons when they have particular importance for understanding play transmission and survival, and the different ways in which publication was shaped and controlled by a range of agents.

In offering a reappraisal of the history play, this study is interested in how a play's agents of production (most centrally, dramatists, companies, patrons, and publishers) influenced the development, performance, and publication of history plays (including the composition of paratexts). The relative significance of these agents of production varies on a case-by-case basis, and the synchronic structure of this study will facilitate a shift in emphasis when necessary. This focus on history plays will be used, at the same time, to reconsider aspects of performance and publication that have implications beyond the immediate issue of historical engagements, including the development of a market for professional playbooks, the role of aristocratic patronage in performance and print contexts, and the importance of paratextual materials in positioning a printed play.

1

Establishing an identity in print: Queen Elizabeth's Men and the choice of history in the early 1590s

Yet one W.G. getting a copie therof at some yongmans hand that lacked a little money and much discretion [...] put it forth exceedingly corrupted: euen as if by meanes of a broker for hire, he should haue entised into his house a faire maide and done her villainie, and after all to bescratched her face, torne her apparell, berayed and disfigured her, and then thrust her out of dores dishonested. In such plight after long wandring she came at length home to the sight of her frendes who scant knew her but by a few tokens and markes remayning. They, the authors, I meane, though they were very much displeased that she so ranne abroad without leaue, whereby she caught her shame, as many wantons do, yet seing the case as it is remedillesse, haue for common honestie and shamefastnesse new apparelled, trimmed, and attired her in such forme as she was before. In which better forme since she hath come to me, I haue harbored her for her frendes sake and her owne.¹

Quoted at length, this prefatory address, 'The P[rinter] to the Reader', from the second edition of Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville's *Gorboduc* (alternatively titled, in this edition, *The Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex*, c.1570) provides a useful opening example for this study, occupying a formative position in shaping and understanding commercial playbook publication during the early modern period.² An Inns of Court play first performed in the Inner Temple on Twelfth Night 1562, and at Whitehall on 18 January 1562 at Elizabeth I's command, *Gorboduc* is frequently discussed as an influential model for the later development of tragedy on the professional stages, as considered by Greg Walker, for example, who describes the play as 'a landmark in English literary history', being 'the earliest extant five-act verse tragedy in English, the earliest attempt to imitate Senecan tragic form in English, the earliest surviving English drama in blank verse, and the earliest English play to adopt the use of dumb-shows preceding each act', offering 'a point of departure for much of the Renaissance

¹ 'The P. to the Reader' in Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *The Tragidie of Ferrex and Porrex* (STC 18685, [1570(?)]), A2r. Further references will be given after quotations.

² This second edition of *Gorboduc* is undated, but the title page references the play's initial performance 'before the Queenes Maiestie, about nine yeares past, vz. the xvij. day of Ianuarie. 1561. by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple' (A1r), which suggests a publication date of c.1570.

dramatic experimentation of the following decades'.³ With its dramatization of the reign of the legendary British King Gorboduc and the disorder and destruction ensuing from his attempt to divide Britain between his two sons, Ferrex and Porrex, the play also exemplifies the fluid negotiations between the dramatic genres of tragedy and history, while sharing parallels in subject, style, and emphasis with later plays for the professional theatres, including *Locrine* (1595) and *King Lear* (1608), making its privileged position not altogether unwarranted.⁴

However, the significance of *Gorboduc* for this study lies especially in the text's selection and presentation as a printed playbook, the above prefatory address (only included in the play's second edition in c.1570) introducing several important practices that will be featured throughout this study and which can be witnessed in the later publication of professional plays, such as those from Queen Elizabeth's Men (including *Selimus* and *The True Tragedy of Richard III* in 1594) that form part of the focus of this chapter. *Gorboduc* was initially performed for small, coterie audiences – specifically Elizabeth I and the Inns of Court during the 1560s – and its publication as a playbook (with its first edition in 1565) involved repositioning for a print market. This shift is explicitly presented in the address to readers from the play's second edition, which was, as described on the title page, 'Imprinted at London by Iohn Daye' (A1r). The play's preface, entitled 'The P[rinter] to the Reader', suggests that Day (as printer) was responsible for the paratext.⁵ It is probable that Day was also the play's

³ *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.201.

⁴ Cf. Irby B. Cauthen Jr.'s edition of the play in which he remarks, '*Gorboduc* is a landmark in English drama. It is the first real English tragedy; although it adheres to the Senecan tradition, it modifies that tradition in order to express certain concepts of Tudor political theory.' Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *Gorboduc or Ferrex and Porrex* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p.xiii.

⁵ The abbreviation in the address's title, 'The P. to the Reader', should be expanded to 'printer', as a terminological distinction between printer and publisher had not yet stabilized and stationers habitually identified themselves as either printers or booksellers. However, such addresses were usually written by the individual occupying the role of publisher, often distinct from the individual undertaking the printing (although not in this case). As Laurie Maguire observes, 'sixteenth- and seventeenth-century epistles to printed texts, headed "From the Printer to the Reader", often mean "From the Publisher to the Reader", "printer" being used simply in the sense of "the one who caused the text to be printed"'. 'The Craft of Printing (1600)' in *A Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by David Scott Kastan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp.434-49 (p.435).

publisher, as addresses from stationers were usually written by the individual who invested in the text. This view is supported by Day's claims of ownership in the preface, his wider output of published texts, and the fact that no other stationers are connected with the publication of this edition.

In his paratextual address, Day describes the circumstances surrounding the publication of the play's first edition in 1565 by 'W.G.' (William Griffith), admonishing Griffith for procuring a copy of the text from some unscrupulous 'yongmans hand' and publishing it in an 'exceedingly corrupted' state. Day vividly compares the maligned printing of *Gorboduc* to the defiling of a 'faire maide', who is left 'beraryed and disfigured', scorned and unrecognizable to those who knew her previously. Indeed, as Douglas Brooks puts it, Day's address 'essentially rehearses all of the main issues that would eventually constitute the foundation of twentieth-century bibliographic, editorial, and scholarly approaches to dramatic texts produced in early modern England', devising, as Wendy Wall argues, 'a language of justification and disavowal'.⁶ In this case, Day's accusations of textual piracy were probably part of a publishing strategy to advertise the authority of his new edition; strikingly, Day does not refer to either dramatist on the title page of his edition, despite the prominence he affords to their authorizing function in the prefatory address and their central position on Griffith's 1565 title page, which even specifies the contributions made by Norton and Sackville.⁷ It is, instead, Day's authority that is most conspicuous in his edition, the title page displaying his name in large type and all other authorizing references remaining vague, including the centralized title-page description that the play has been 'Seen and allowed' (A1r). As Brooks continues, Day's prefatory accusations are more likely connected to his somewhat precarious position in the London book trade, and his primary purpose is 'the re-embodiment and

⁶ Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.31; Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p.21.

⁷ On the 1565 title page, Griffith specifies that 'three Actes were wrytten by Thomas Nortone, and the two laste by Thomas Sackuyle'. *The Tragedie of Gorboduc* (STC 18684, 1565), A1r.

commodification of a play-text that had already been printed and marketed by someone else', an approach that parallels the prefatory claims and strategies of later publications, including Shakespeare's First Folio (which will be discussed in Chapter 4).⁸ Day's address more significantly draws attention to *his* agency in the publication process, highlighting several themes and practices that have informed the selection, presentation, and reception of professional plays, following the publication of their first representatives in 1584.

Day's preface also points to the possible gulf between a play in performance and as a printed text, a consideration that is rarely foregrounded in sustained studies of history plays. While it is inevitable and justifiable to extrapolate ideas of performance from printed representatives, these two markets are not commensurate, and playbooks readily demonstrate their representation for readers, which may differ significantly from their performance context and position within the repertory of a theatrical company. In this case, the extant testimony of an Elizabethan courtier, Robert Beale, who witnessed *Gorboduc*'s production in the Inner Temple, describes the second dumb show in performance as stressing the play's commentary upon Elizabeth's marital situation:

Then cam[e] in a king to whome was geuen a clere glasse, and a golden cupp of golde covered, full of poyson, the glasse he caste under his fote and brake hyt, the poyson he drank of, after cam[e] in mourners. The shadowes were declared by the Chore[us] first to signifie unytie, the 2 [i.e. second] howe that men refused the certen and toocke the uncerten, whereby was ment that yt was better for the Quene to marye with the L[ord] R[obert] knowen then with the K[ing] of Sweden.⁹

While the relationship between the courtly performances and printed texts remains unclear and Beale's testimony represents the perspective of only one viewer, the extant printed texts make no references to marriage at any point, and the 'order and signification' of the second dumb show in the 1570 edition offers a different interpretation of its import:

Hereby was signified, that as glasse by nature holdeth no poyson, but is clere and may easely be seen through, ne boweth by any arte; So a faythfull counsellour holdeth no treason, but is playne and open, ne yeldeth to any

⁸ Brooks, p. 35; see also pp.27-37.

⁹ Quoted in Walker, pp.210-11.

vndiscrete affection, but geueth holosome counsell, which the yll aduised Prince refuseth. The delightfull golde filled with poyson betokeneth flattery, which vnder faire seeming of pleasant wordes beareth deadly poyson, which destroyed the Prince that receyueth it. As befell in the two brethren Ferrex and Porrex, who refusing the holosome advise of graue counsellours, credited these yong Paracites, and brought to themselues death and destruction therby.

[C2v]

This description of the dumb show concentrates on the importance of ‘holosome counsell’ for rulers, and suggests that the play as a printed text draws attention to broad issues of government, council, national unity, and rebellion. When the play was performed in 1562 and first published in 1565, Elizabeth’s marital prospects with Robert Dudley were a more topical issue; however, by 1570, it was no longer a pressing political matter. The difference between the applications of the play in performance and as a printed text highlights the changing uses and interpretations of historical drama which this study aims to privilege. As Jaecheol Kim explains, ‘getting away from the private Inner Temple and Whitehall performances, the play could be received by a more extensive readership, most of whom were already ignorant of the queen’s marital politics’, and could be re-presented as a drama with a political import that had immediate relevance to contemporary events, namely the 1569 Northern Rebellion.¹⁰

As will be examined throughout this study, the repositioning of plays as printed texts can be witnessed through the timing of editions as they relate to contemporary concerns, the wider publishing output of a particular stationer, and the presentation of the playbooks, including the incorporation of paratextual materials. While Day’s preface concentrates on the authority of the text, it also functions as a looking glass for the play as a whole. This edition appeared on the London bookstalls shortly after the Northern Rebellion, which saw the uprising of disaffected Catholic earls in the north of England, and two years before the execution of Thomas Percy, seventh earl of Northumberland, in 1572, one of the main leaders of the Rebellion. As a publisher, Day was a supporter of Reformation politics, especially after the

¹⁰ ‘The North-South Divide in *Gorboduc*: Fratricide Remembered and Forgotten’, *Studies in Philology*, 111:4 (2014), 691-719; p.693.

Northern Rebellion: he was the printer and co-editor of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563, 1570, 1576, 1583), he was patronized by William Cecil and Robert Dudley, and he was Thomas Norton's primary publisher.¹¹ Norton, in addition to his contributions to *Gorboduc*, was the main pamphleteer of the Elizabethan government against the Northern Rebellion, and Day printed treatises by Norton on this subject in c.1570, which were issued in a collection entitled *All such treatises as have lately been published by Thomas Norton*.¹² This collection also contained Day's *Gorboduc* edition, and the title page describes the volume as 'seen and allowed according to the order of the Queenes Injunctions'. In this context, Day's investment in *Gorboduc* encourages a reading of the play that highlights the dangers of a divided nation (as *Gorboduc* instigates) and advocates a unified state with central power and government control contained in the south of the country. The collected edition's contents page also provides summaries of the treatises and play, spatially and thematically aligning their subjects and drawing attention to the volume's interest in the containment of rebellion. Offering a localized reading of a history play, Day's edition highlights the agency of stationers in the selection and presentation of plays, and the importance of a critical approach that centralizes such exempla in discussions of genre and in understanding the shifting utility of the past in commercial plays and playbooks.

At the time of Day's edition in 1570, however, the first purpose-built London playhouses had not yet appeared. The Theatre was built in 1576 and the Curtain in 1577, and the first professional playbooks were printed in 1584. While it is outside the purposes of this study to address the emergence of commercial playing companies and performance venues, as well as the development of professional historical drama from earlier forms of engagement, the

¹¹ John N. King, 'John Day: Master Printer of the English Reformation' in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. by Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.180-208.

¹² Day's edition of *All such treatises as have been lately published by Thomas Norton* contained two pamphlets opposing the Rebellion: 'To the Queenes Maiesties poore deceiued subiects of the Northe contrey drawn into rebellion by the Earles of Northumberland and Westmerland' and 'A warning against the dangerous practises of the Papistes, and specially the parteners of the late Rebellion' (STC 18677, [1570]). Date of publication is from the STC.

private and courtly productions of ‘non-professional’ plays, such as *Gorboduc*, were certainly influential. Indeed, what is of particular interest in this early example of historical performance and publication is Day’s presentation of the text, which highlights a transition from a private to a commercial context and draws attention to a range of publishing and positioning strategies that were integral in the later development and transmission of professional plays. It offers an important point of departure for this study, demonstrating the confluence of varying agents and voices that this examination of genre aims to privilege. Notably, *Gorboduc* was reprinted in its third edition in 1590 (by Edward Allde for John Perrin, STC 17029), a significant year for this chapter as it marks the first incorporation of more extensive paratextual materials into commercial playbooks through the strategies of stationer Richard Jones. Jones’s paratexts were influenced by the publication of earlier non-professional plays, in particular, *Gorboduc*, which appeared in 1590 with new paratextual materials and was probably issued both independently and in conjunction with John Lydgate’s *The Serpent of Division*, marking another re-presentation of the play distinct from its first two editions.¹³

Indeed, from 1590, stationers started to demonstrate a regular interest in commercial plays, possibly instigated by the efforts and success of Richard Jones. Prior to this point, plays from the commercial theatres had only been published sporadically, with seven editions in 1584 (marking the inauguration of the market for professional playbooks), and one edition in 1589, which demonstrates the nascent and uncertain position of professional drama within the print market.¹⁴ However, the situation started to change from 1590, perhaps impelled by Jones’s

¹³ W.W. Greg suggests that, owing to the number of extant copies, it seems likely the play was published independently. Greg, I, p.117.

¹⁴ In 1584, two editions of John Lyly’s *Sappho and Phao*, three editions of Lyly’s *Campaspe*, one edition of George Peele’s *The Arraignement of Paris*, and one edition of Robert Wilson’s *The Three Ladies of London* were published, followed by the anonymous *Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* in 1589. The majority of these plays were from the boys’ companies, and claimed (on their title pages) to have been performed at court for Elizabeth, which suggests they were ‘private’ theatrical events. However, the additional performances of these plays in front of paying audiences at small theatres in St Paul’s and Blackfriars, qualifies their classification as ‘commercial’ plays. See, for example, the ‘Prologue at the Black fyers’ in *Sappho and Phao* (Ar2).

publication in that year of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (Part 1 and 2) and Robert Wilson's *Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, both of which engage with historical subjects in their respective representations of fourteenth-century Persian history and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Judging by Jones's rapid reprinting of *Tamburlaine* in 1593, Marlowe's plays proved successful with readers, and encouraged further investment in plays from the commercial theatres, particularly history plays. In his address to the 'Gentlemen readers' who 'take pleasure in reading Histories', Jones claims a prominent role in shaping Marlowe's plays for publication, positioning himself as an active reader and editor who has transformed Marlowe's plays as they were performed on stage and adapted them to suit a projected image of his reading public:

I haue (purposely) omitted and left out some fond and friuolous Iestures, digressing (and in my poore opinion) far vnmeet for the matter, which I thought, might seeme more tedious vnto the wise, than any way els to be regarded, though (happly) they haue bene of some vaine conceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what times they were shewed vpon the stage.¹⁵

This paratextual address was the first to be affixed to a professional play, and takes on an analogous repositioning role to Day's prefatory address in the second edition of *Gorboduc*, demonstrating the significant role stationers could have in selecting plays for publication, controlling their transmission as editors, and expressing interpretations of the texts. Indeed, the various terms used to describe *Tamburlaine* highlight its generic fluidity and the ways in which shifting contexts and agents encourage different applications. Jones implicitly associates *Tamburlaine* with the 'Histories' enjoyed by 'Gentlemen Readers' in his preface (A2r), while the title page describes the plays as 'two Tragicall Discourses' (A1r), and the Stationers' Register entry on 14 August 1590 records them as 'the twooe commicall discourses of Tomberlein'.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Tamburlaine the Great* (STC 17425, 1590), A2r. Further references will be given after quotations.

¹⁶ Arber, II, p.558.

A few years later, in 1594, an unprecedented nineteen professional plays were published (all of which were first editions with the exception of *The Spanish Tragedy*), and twenty-one were entered in the Stationers' Register; in both cases, the majority of these plays deal with representations of the past.¹⁷ The year 1594 has regularly attracted attention from critics: in 2010, for example, *Shakespeare Quarterly* devoted an entire issue to conditions of performance and publication in 1594. The aspect most frequently debated is the influential duopoly theory put forward by Andrew Gurr, in which the Chamberlain's Men and the Admiral's Men are established as the two 'allowed' theatrical troupes in London, each with an allocated venue and an already-proven repertory of plays, a view which has been challenged by critics, such as Knutson.¹⁸ Alternatively, this chapter will concentrate on the publication patterns and precedents witnessed during the year, which reveal an increasing interest in plays from the commercial theatres as texts to be read, the prominence of historical subject matter among these playbooks, and the ways in which they constitute local examples of historical engagement and interpretation, aspects which have been overlooked in recent critical accounts.

More pivotal than the number of printed editions or Stationers' Register entries in 1594 are the connections between these plays, which indicate the emergence of particular marketing strategies and the burgeoning position of commercial playbooks within the book trade, and link these texts with non-professional plays and non-dramatic texts. Appendix B lists these published plays and entries, and will be considered in greater detail throughout this chapter. However, several parallels are immediately apparent: the majority of the plays engage with historical subjects or recognizable pasts (as defined by the introduction), a significant number of the printed texts and entries are connected to Queen Elizabeth's Men and stationer Thomas Creede (pointing to the possibility of a publishing network), and another grouping of plays

¹⁷ Entry in the Stationers' Register protected the rights of stationers to print specific works and was usually a precursor to publication. See Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks,' pp.396-405.

¹⁸ Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.1-5; Knutson, 'What's So Special about 1594?', *SQ*, 61:4 (2010), 449-467.

displays similar patterns in title-page references to dramatists, theatrical companies, and associated patrons.¹⁹ These links suggest that stationers were endeavouring to organize and position their playbooks, drawing on and adapting established practices from other printed texts. For example, the title pages containing attribution parallels implicitly associate their dramatists with companies and aristocratic or royal patrons, and contain assertions of their dramatists' gentlemanly status or university education, suggesting an attempt to elevate the status of the playbooks through these connections. Such strategies reflect the presentation of non-professional plays, such as *Gorboduc*, which advertises (in 1565 and 1590) its dramatists' identities and connection with Elizabeth I through the play's court performance. Indeed, these commercial playbooks are among the first to contain authorial attributions. Previously, only Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* (to 'R.W.') and Peele's *Edward I* (to 'George Peele Maister of Artes in Oxenforde') refer to authorship (and not altogether unambiguously), which makes this sudden concentration of more extensive and consistent attributions indicative of a wider attempt to situate playbooks within the print market.²⁰

Similarly, the playbooks and entries associated with Queen Elizabeth's Men point to another strategy by stationer Thomas Creede to pursue and promote the plays of this company in print, a publishing pattern that will form the focus of this chapter, and which has had considerable consequences for understanding the repertory of the queen's company. Rather than 1594 being most significant for the concentration of printed plays appearing on the London bookstalls, this year is particularly important because of the transparent efforts to position professional playbooks within the print market, which can be witnessed in the groupings of

¹⁹ Those plays associated with Thomas Creede and the Queen's Men include *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, *Selimus*, *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, and, less securely, *The Scottish History of James IV* and *Locrine*. The plays with parallels in attribution patterns, published by stationers Thomas Creede, John Danter, Edward White, William Jones, Cuthbert Burby, and Thomas Woodcock, include *A Looking Glass for London and England* ('Made by Thomas Lodge Gentleman, and Robert Greene'), *The Wounds of Civil War* ('Written by Thomas Lodge Gent'), *The Massacre at Paris* ('Written by Christopher Marlow'), *Edward II* ('Written by Chri. Marlow Gent'), *Dido, Queen of Carthage* ('Written by Christopher Marlowe, and Thomas Nash. Gent'), *The Cobbler's Prophecy* ('Written by Robert Wilson. Gent'), and *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* ('made by Robert Greene, Maister of Arts').

²⁰ *The pleasant and statelie morall, of the three lordes and three ladies of London* (STC 25783, 1590), A1r; *The famous chronicle of king Edward the first* (STC 19535, 1593), L3v.

plays displaying analogous marketing strategies, such as those plays with attribution parallels and Creede's plays for Queen Elizabeth's Men.

As the majority of plays entered in the Register and printed in 1594 engage with historical material, this concentration in subject matter also serves to characterize the nascent market for commercial playbooks, suggesting that stationers anticipated such texts as being most likely to interest readers. This emphasis on historical material has not been recognized by previous studies which identify history plays as those that deal with English monarchical history and were written by Shakespeare, perhaps because only one of the 1594 plays, *The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster*, has been attributed (partly) to Shakespeare. As this chapter will show, the thematic and commercial connections between the 1594 plays problematize the prevailing narrow focus of most history play studies, highlighting the ways in which these varied texts were negotiated in tandem by their producers and readers, while also suggesting that the developing market for playbooks is closely tied to the presentation of historical dramatizations in print.

In fact, the most conspicuous absence of 'history' in relation to the 1594 playbooks is in their title-page classification: the terms 'history' or 'chronicle' (and their variants) are rarely used. The designation 'history' is primarily applied for its etymological roots in denoting a story and, in 1594, is used on three printed texts, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* ('Honorable Historie'), *Orlando Furioso* ('Historie'), and *The Taming of a Shrew* ('Pleasant Conceited Historie'), only the first of which could convincingly be described as dramatizing the past (through the connection of its titular characters to the historical figures Roger Bacon and Thomas Bungay).²¹ Most of the plays published or entered in the Register in 1594 are described as tragedies, or the military focus of their action is emphasized through the use of

²¹ Robert Greene, *The honorable historie of frier Bacon, and frier Bongay* (STC 12267, 1594), A2r; Robert Greene, *The historie of Orlando Furioso* (STC 12265, 1594), A2r; Anon, *A pleasant conceited historie, called The taming of a shrew* (STC 23667, 1594), A1r. Further references will be given after quotations.

terms such as ‘battle’, ‘contention’, ‘massacre’, ‘reign’, ‘wars’, and ‘wounds’ on their title pages, which highlights the tendency of these plays to draw on chronicle sources and concentrate on issues of leadership, military conflict, and civil uprising. *Arden of Feversham* (1592), in contrast, dramatizes a domestic and local history, and the title page advertises this emphasis, presenting ‘The Lamentable and Trve Tragedie of M. Arden of Feversham in Kent, Who was most wickedlye murdered, by the meanes of his disloyall and wanton wyfe [...] Wherin is shewed the great mallice and discimulation of a wicked woman, the vnsatiabile desire of filthie lust and the shamefull end of all murderers’.²² Although the account of Arden’s murder is contained in Holinshed’s *Chronicles* (1577 and 1587), this domestic history is a notable exception to the more widespread emphasis on monarchy, governance, war, and politics in the published texts.

Indeed, the plays’ collective interest in these issues can be seen in connection to contemporary political events, as will be discussed throughout the chapter, suggesting one reason for their success with publishers and readers. As Andy Kesson and Emma Smith observe, ‘Elizabethan playtexts began to establish a stable market, ensuring that plays could be read well beyond the theatre by a wide readership as a means to connect with contemporary political and social debate.’²³ For many of these history plays, the choice and manipulation of historical subject matter became a means of exploring the concerns of the late Elizabethan period through the appropriation of a particular past and, in doing so, establishing a sense of historical continuity and political import. As a result of their adaptability and application, together with their success on stage, these early history plays may have presented themselves as the most relevant thematic grouping for publishers, suggesting an explanation for the dominance of historical subject matter in printed plays from this period.

²² *Arden of Feversham* (STC 733, 1592), A1r.

²³ *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), p.6.

In considering these issues, the first part of the chapter will show how the history play occupies a pivotal position in the generation of a market and publishing strategies for commercial playbooks, which can be most clearly seen in relation to Queen Elizabeth's Men and the efforts of stationer Thomas Creede, and which forms the first publishing network that will be explored in this study. The second part of the chapter will further challenge the dominance of a narrow definition of historical drama by highlighting the connections between plays dealing with different kinds of history (including *The Battle of Alcazar* and *1 Henry VI*) and the position of historical engagement within the repertoires of other theatrical companies in the early 1590s (most centrally, Lord Strange's Men). In addition to repositioning the history play and demonstrating its importance for early playbook publication, this chapter will consider the importance of playbook paratexts in offering a reading of a play, the development of early attribution practices, the significance of the geography of the London book trade in shaping the market for professional playbooks, and the archival absences that make it difficult to assess company repertoires.

**The 'Stately Morall' of the Queen's Men and their stationers: Mapping an interest in
'Tudor' history²⁴**

Of the early professional companies, Queen Elizabeth's Men have generally received the most critical attention, and the prominence of history plays in their repertory, as well as their political orientation, have been highlighted in recent studies. McMillin and MacLean's comprehensive study, *The Queen's Men and their Plays*, attributes nine extant plays to the company's repertory: *Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* (1590), *The Troublesome Reign of King John* (1591), *Selimus* (1594), *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (1594), *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594), *The Old Wives Tale* (1595), *The Famous Victories of Henry V* (1598), *Clyomon and Clamydes* (1599), and *King Leir* (1605).²⁵ Other studies, including

²⁴ Wilson, *Three Lodes*, A1r.

²⁵ *The Troublesome Reign of King John* is counted as one play, although the printed editions describe it as a two-part play. This is probably a marketing strategy to capitalize on the success of Marlowe's two parts of *Tamburlaine*. It is unlikely that the *Troublesome Reign* was performed in two parts, as the

Gurr, have attributed additional surviving and lost plays to the company.²⁶ As Terence Schoone-Jongen observes, over twenty plays have been connected to the Queen's Men, but only these nine surviving plays can be unquestionably assigned to the company's repertory, and they form the focus of this section.²⁷ The majority of these plays (with the exception of *Clyomon and Clamydes* and *The Old Wives Tale*) also dramatize a recognizable past (mostly from English history); indeed, McMillin and MacLean assert that the 'most important kind of play performed by the Queen's Men was the English history play', which the company established 'in the popular theatre before other companies took it up'.²⁸ McMillin and MacLean suggest the plays broadly support a Protestant and royalist ideology and that they combine 'anti-Catholicism with a specifically Protestant style, "truth" and "plainness" intertwined'.²⁹ Other critics, such as Brian Walsh, have identified greater complexities within the plays, especially from a performance perspective, arguing that 'the repertory of the Queen's Men can hardly be reduced to a coherent political or even theological agenda'.³⁰ However, McMillin and MacLean's analysis of the company's formation as a sharply political venture remains dominant.

Indeed, the circumstances of the company's formation in 1583 suggest political and religious motivations contributed significantly to this development. Both Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, and Sir Francis Walsingham were involved in the establishment of the Queen's Men, and were 'the dominant members of what has been characterized as "an aggressively Protestant party" in the Privy Council'.³¹ The majority of this new 'all-star' troupe of actors was provided by Leicester's Men, a company which McMillin and MacLean describe as

events of Part 1 end in the midst of action, just before Arthur's death. Moreover, the collective length of both parts is within the usual range for the period, which suggests the division was artificial. See Wiggins, *Catalogue*, III, p.458.

²⁶ Gurr's count stands at thirteen plays (lost and extant); *SPC*, p.211.

²⁷ *Shakespeare's Companies: William Shakespeare's Early Career and the Acting Companies, 1577-1594* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p.96.

²⁸ *The Queen's Men and their Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.33, 36, 88-89.

²⁹ McMillin and MacLean, p.36.

³⁰ Brian Walsh, *Shakespeare, the Queen's Men and the Elizabethan Performance of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.31.

³¹ McMillin and MacLean, p.22.

promoting Leicester's own religious and political viewpoint. Moreover, it was Walsingham who instructed Edmund Tilney, Master of the Revels, to appoint the Queen's Men, an unusual development as the Revels office operated under the authority of the Lord Chamberlain, and thus Walsingham appears to be taking on a role normally performed by another privy councillor, Thomas Radcliffe, third earl of Sussex. At this time, both Walsingham's and Leicester's political concerns centred on the threat of Catholicism, radical Protestantism, civil rebellion, and increasingly hostile relations with Spain, especially following the exposure of the Throckmorton plot and the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, in 1584. McMillin and MacLean propose that 'the Queen's Men were formed to spread Protestant and royalist propaganda through a divided realm and to close a breach within radical Protestantism'.³² As the Queen's Men operated primarily as a touring company, their formation presented an opportunity for spreading Tudor apologia, carrying royal influence throughout the country, and possibly bearing messages on behalf of the government and the intelligence system operated by Walsingham. Indeed, McMillin and MacLean suggest that some of the players had court connections, including Richard Tarlton, who corresponded with Walsingham and Sir Philip Sidney (who was godfather to Tarlton's son), and there are parallels between the names of players and the names of messengers in court records, including Laurence Dutton and John Symons.³³ The company was also involved in the Marprelate controversy of 1588-90, as presented in the anti-Martinist pamphlet *Martin's Month's Mind* (1589): in the address to the reader, the pamphlet refers to 'hir Maiesties men' and suggests the Queen's Men were used to counteract Martin's attack on Anglican episcopacy, furthering the impression that they were politically aligned with the interests of the queen and the Privy Council.³⁴

³² *Ibid.*, p.166.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp.25-29.

³⁴ This pamphlet describes how 'Martin' is 'first drie beaten, & theby his bones broken, then whipt that made him winse, then wormd and launced, that he tooke verie grieuouslie, to be made a Maygame vpon the Stage, and so bangd, both with prose and rime on euerie side, as he knewe not which way to turne himselfe.' *Martins Months Minde* (STC 17452, 1589), E3v.

The extant history plays from the Queen's Men can be seen as employing rhetorical and formal strategies that promote Protestant and royalist sympathies, and it is a common feature of these plays to conclude with one of the characters offering a lengthy affirmation of such a position, most notably in the form of a celebratory prognostication of Elizabeth's reign. In the anonymous *True Tragedy of Richard III*, for example, 'Eliza' (Elizabeth of York), the 'Queene' (Elizabeth Woodville), and a messenger address the audience directly in the play's final scene, celebrating the 'ioyning of these Houses both in one' and giving an account of the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, who 'did restore the Gospell to his light', before briefly acknowledging the Catholic reign of Mary I (and highlighting her marriage to 'Philip King of Spaine' who led the Armada against England in 1588).³⁵ The play closes with an elaborate eulogy to Elizabeth I, who is described as 'a mirrour in her age, by whose wise life and ciuill gouernment, her country was defended from the crueltie of famine, fire and swoord, warres, fearefull messengers' (I2r), with the last comment alluding to recent assassination attempts, such as the Babington Plot in 1586. In a pointed change from prose to verse, the 'Queene' then embarks on a panegyric that focuses on Elizabeth's position as a Protestant leader who has 'put proud Antichrist to flight, | And bene the meanes that ciuill wars did cease' (I2r), emphasizing a specific religio-political positioning in the play's final lines.

The conclusion of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* offers a similar prognostication of Elizabeth's reign from the repentant Friar Bacon, linking Elizabeth with a legendary Trojan lineage, and promoting the stability and peace brought through her accession, in contrast to the persistent conflicts dominating earlier reigns:

That here where Brute did build his Troynouant,
From forth the royall garden of a King,
Shall flowrish out, so rich and faire a bud,
Whose brightnesse shall deface proude Phoebus flower
And ouer-shadow Albion with her leaues.
Till then, Mars shall be maister of the field,
But then the stormie threats of wars shall cease.

[I1v-I2r]

³⁵ *The true tragedie of Richard the third* (STC 21009, 1594), I1v-I2r. Further references will be given after quotations.

For a comic play that is less reliant on chronicle sources than *The True Tragedy of Richard III* or *King Leir* (not published until 1605), this parallel concluding structure suggests a continuity between the plays and their approaches to history, namely through their promotion of the Tudor line. As Stern has observed, it was common practice for plays to end with an epilogue prayer for the queen (and occasionally for the privy council).³⁶ These plays from the Queen's Men are, however, particularly striking as their addresses to Elizabeth are incorporated within the main text of the play, rather than as part of a detached (and detachable) epilogue. This incorporation emphasizes a link between these plays and Tudor political interests. A similar dramatic strategy is apparent towards the end of *Selimus*, where Corcut offers a lengthy and prominently placed monologue in praise of Christianity, and describes his recent conversion brought about through his contact with an Anglicized clown figure, Bullithrubble.³⁷ Notably, these three plays, which overtly suggest specific religious and political alignments, were all first published in 1594, the most significant year for the early publication of history plays and, in particular, history plays from the Queen's Men. Other plays from the Queen's Men were entered in the Stationers' Register in 1594, but only these three were published in that year, forming a connected group that displays similar propagandistic and formal devices that seem to further a royalist agenda.

This evaluation of the Queen's Men and the political orientation of their repertory relies, however, on the assumption that the extant printed texts attributed to the company are largely commensurate with their total performance repertory. As with other Elizabethan companies, the majority of the plays performed by the Queen's Men were not printed and have not survived, disappearing without even leaving a record of their titles.³⁸ This paucity of evidence

³⁶ Tiffany Stern, 'Epilogues, Prayers after Plays, and Shakespeare's *2 Henry IV*', *Theatre Notebook*, 64:3 (2010), 122-29.

³⁷ Robert Greene(?)/Anon., *The First part of the Tragicall raigne of Selimus* (STC 12310a, 1594), 11r. Further references will be given after quotations.

³⁸ Gurr, for example, attributes the lost plays 'Felix and Philomena', 'Five Plays in One', 'Phyllida and Corin', and 'Three Plays in One' to the Queen's Men (*SPC*, p.211). These few titles do not add significantly to the number of plays connected to the company's repertory, and their titles (especially 'Five Plays in One' and 'Three Plays in One') do not provide a clear indication of content. David

does not necessarily lead to an interpretative impasse. While it may be problematic to assert confidently that the full performance repertory of the Queen's Men was comprised mainly of history plays with a specific political design, it is possible to discuss the unity of their printed representatives, and examine the known repertory of the Queen's Men as potentially indicative of certain publishing strategies, especially in light of the coherence of this group of texts. As McMillin and MacLean acknowledge but do not fully investigate, 'when the Queen's Men plays are brought together as one *textual* group [...] sameness rather than variety is a leading characteristic' (my emphasis).³⁹ Although we cannot be certain about the position of the history play in the company's larger performance repertory, the history play is the main genre of the Queen's Men *in print*, and this concentration raises questions about the roles of the individuals involved in their publication, especially as the presentation of these plays in print, the parallels in their historical emphasis and engagement, and the small network of stationers controlling their publication suggest it is a considered strategy.

Plays from the Queen's Men first appeared in print in 1590 and 1591, with Wilson's *Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* and the two parts of the anonymous *Troublesome Reign of King John*, published by Richard Jones and Sampson Clarke, respectively. As history plays, they can be seen as establishing a pattern or precedent that would come to characterize the publication strategies of later history plays from the Queen's Men, both promoting a 'morall' position that elevates Christian (and specifically, Protestant or proto-Protestant) leaders in defence of political and religious threats from foreign countries, namely Catholic Spain and France, and the Roman Church. Using morality-play characters and a medley structure, *Three Lords and Three Ladies* seizes upon recent and topical events, allegorizing the defeat of the Spanish Armada, while *The Troublesome Reign of King John* presents the much-appropriated

McInnis and Matthew Steggle estimate that around 3000 different plays were written and performed between 1567 and 1642, and of these, approximately 543 are extant and 744 are 'identifiable as lost'. *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, ed. by David McInnis and Matthew Steggle (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.1.

³⁹ McMillin and MacLean, p.98.

figure of King John as a type of proto-Protestant martyr who defends England against Popish influence and the threat of foreign control. While the dramatization of religio-political conflict in both of these plays (especially *The Troublesome Reign*) is far from unambiguous propagandizing in support of a royalist and Protestant position, the paratextual materials of the plays suggest a more straightforward presentation.⁴⁰

Jones's in-tandem publication of *Tamburlaine* from the Admiral's Men and *Three Lords and Three Ladies* from the Queen's Men in 1590 throws into relief the sharp contrasts between these plays, and effectively sets up two clearly differentiated types of historical drama: the patriotic and conservative 'Stately Morall' of *Three Lords and Three Ladies* from the Queen's company, and the challenging and subversive *Tamburlaine* from the Admiral's Men. This contrast is pursued by the Prologue in *Tamburlaine*, which criticizes the 'iygging vaines of riming mother wits, | And such conceits as clownage keepes in pay' (A3r), characteristic features of plays from the Queen's Men. Moreover, in his own address to 'the Gentlemen Readers', Jones praises *Tamburlaine* as 'so great a Conquerour, and so mightie a Monarque' (A2r) and elevates the style of the 'two Tragicall Discourses' (A1r) above the comic gestures and frivolity prominent on the London stages, effectively presenting *Tamburlaine* as responding directly (and critically) to the style of Wilson's play, which even includes a lament for the clown, Richard Tarlton. Jones entered *Three Lords and Three Ladies* in the Stationers' Register on 31 July 1590 and *Tamburlaine* on 14 August 1590, which makes it likely that the two plays appeared on the bookstalls at a similar time and were designed to respond to each other. Jones's print presentation implies, firstly, that plays from these companies were recognized in the period as offering different theatrical styles and dramatizations of the past, and secondly, that this distinction was a potential advertising strategy for publishers that could

⁴⁰ The main texts occasionally complicate their apparently straightforward and easily elucidated political positions, as in *The Troublesome Reign*, where King John is presented as culpable for some of the play's crises, contrasting with, for example, his emphatically positive representation in *An Homily Against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* (STC 13680, 1570), I2v-I3v.

be heightened through playbook presentation and the ways in which stationers edit and re-present plays for readers.

The Troublesome Reign of King John furthers the contrast between the two plays published by Jones, aligning itself with the earlier history from the Queen's Men, and seeking to announce its separation and superiority to the history represented by *Tamburlaine* and by the Admiral's Men. It does, however, adopt the two-part structure popularized by *Tamburlaine*, which was possibly an advertising strategy as the *Troublesome Reign* seems unlikely to have been performed in two parts.⁴¹ In an address to 'the Gentlemen Readers' who have previously 'giuen applause vnto an Infidel', the contrast between 'the Scythian Tamburlaine' and the 'warlike Christian' King John is made explicit, and a specific model of leadership is promoted through the latter, who for 'Christs true faith indur'd he many a storme | And set himselfe against the Man of Rome'.⁴² These early print precedents therefore set up an opposition between the plays of the Queen's Men and those of other companies, specifically the Admiral's Men. The history plays from the Queen's Men are generally explicit in their promotion of a royalist and Protestant position (through, for example, concluding eulogies that delineate their allegiances, as in *The True Tragedy of Richard III*), and this positioning is heightened through the strategies of stationers and the plays' paratextual materials, as in *The Troublesome Reign*.

These initial strategies can be seen as informing the publication of history plays from the Queen's Men in 1594, which marks the most significant year for the transmission of plays from the company (with six entries in the Stationers' Register and three printed editions) and coincides with the unprecedented market expansion in playbook publication (see Appendix B). Critics, including Peter Blayney, have offered explanations for this sudden publication boom; however, the centrality of the Queen's Men in this expansion has not been sufficiently

⁴¹ See n.25.

⁴² Anon., [*The*] *troublesome raigh of Iohn King of England* (STC 14644, 1591), A2r.

recognized.⁴³ The majority of Stationers' Register entries involving professional plays are concentrated in May and June 1594, and almost all of these entries relate to plays associated with the Queen's Men, which suggests this unexpected publication development is much more company-specific than previously acknowledged. Explanations for the market expansion have been proposed, namely the efforts of struggling companies in need of financial revenue to sell their play scripts to stationers, or attempts at generating publicity for the theatres in London, which had reopened following a lengthy closure due to the plague. Both of these explanations are problematic, especially in relation to the Queen's Men. In 'The Publication of Playbooks', Blayney demonstrates the limited economic viability of selling play scripts as a means of raising funds for a theatrical company, and cautiously estimates that plays were sold to stationers for an average of two pounds per play, which is not a significant amount in relation to a company's operating expenses.⁴⁴ Moreover, there is little to indicate that the Queen's Men were in financial difficulty in May 1594. During the court season of 1593-94, the single theatrical entertainment noted in the records was provided by the Queen's Men, and in April, they performed at the Rose theatre with Sussex's Men, recording greater average takings per performance than the Admiral's Men would upon their establishment at the Rose later in the year.⁴⁵ When the Queen's Men started touring again in July 1594, the payments recorded in provincial accounts are consistent with earlier amounts and do not suggest a company struggling under financial difficulties.⁴⁶

The other main explanation – that the publication of playbooks was a form of advertising for the recently reopened London theatres following almost two years of closure due to the plague – is also problematic.⁴⁷ Firstly, the Queen's Men were primarily a touring company. There is no evidence to suggest they ever set up a more permanent London base, as other companies

⁴³ Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks', pp.385-87.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.394-96.

⁴⁵ Holger Schott Syme, 'The Meaning of Success: Stories of 1594 and Its Aftermath', *SQ*, 61:4 (2010), 490-525.

⁴⁶ See McMillin and MacLean, pp.170-88.

⁴⁷ Blayney offers this explanation in 'Publication of Playbooks', p.386.

did, such as Strange's Men and the Admiral's Men, making the publication of their plays not, for this reason, explicable. Indeed, according to Henslowe's *Diary* and provincial records, the Queen's Men immediately started touring again following their brief period at the Rose theatre in April 1594: Henslowe lent his nephew, Francis, fifteen pounds 'for his share to the Quenes players when they brocke & went into the contrey to playe', and performance records in Coventry, for example, indicate that the Queen's Men performed at St Mary's Guild on 4 July 1594 and received forty shillings.⁴⁸ Secondly, it would have been pre-emptive to advertise the resumption of regular theatrical performances through playbook publication, and to assume that the reports of fewer plague deaths were predictive of future patterns and the promise of uninterrupted playing.⁴⁹ The theatres had reopened briefly in January 1594 and again in April 1594, before returning to more frequent performance patterns in May and June. However, as the plague generally worsened in the summer months (as it did in 1593, one of the most devastating years), it is unlikely the companies and stationers could announce or advertise the return of regular playing with any certainty in May 1594.

Instead, the publication of history plays from the Queen's Men in 1594 is perhaps indicative of the company's success and prominent position under royal patronage, a view which departs from the traditional assumption that the Queen's Men were struggling financially, alongside all other theatrical companies, as a result of the supposed 'duopoly' of the Admiral's Men and the Chamberlain's Men.⁵⁰ Contrary to this critical commonplace, publication patterns and playbook presentation suggest that a small network of stationers invested in these previously-unproven professional plays as part of a considered commercial enterprise, selecting plays

⁴⁸ R.A. Foakes (ed.), *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.7; R.W. Ingram (ed.), *REED: Coventry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p.341.

⁴⁹ Court documents and records in Henslowe's *Diary* suggest the theatres were closed from 23 June to 28 December 1592, from 2 February to 26 December 1593, and from 7 February to 31 March 1594. Most (but not all) of these closures can be attributed to outbreaks of the plague. Foakes (ed.), pp.19-21; Chambers *ES*, IV, pp.345-51.

⁵⁰ Recent scholars, such as Knutson, have challenged the view that other theatrical companies were floundering in the wake of the so-called duopoly, claiming it was 'business as usual' in 1594. See 'What's so special about 1594?', pp.449-67.

from a distinguished royal company, and following the advertising strategy set up by Richard Jones, and furthered by Sampson Clarke, a few years earlier.

The main stationer involved in this network is Thomas Creede, occasionally working with bookseller William Barley, and together they are responsible for the publication and entry in the Stationers' Register of the majority of history plays connected to the Queen's Men. Bookseller Edward White is also linked to the company's plays, largely owing to a collected entry in the Stationers' Register on 14 May 1594, which involves several plays associated with the Queen's Men and coincides with the most significant period of history-play entry in the Register.⁵¹ However, White finally printed only one play from the company, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, making his connection much less central and consistent than Creede's and Barley's, who are more clearly involved in a publishing partnership. Creede is the first stationer to invest significantly in history plays and attribution evidence suggests these plays are exclusively from the Queen's Men. Between May and June 1594, Creede entered *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, *Locrine*, and *James IV* in the Stationers' Register, publishing *The True Tragedy* and *Selimus* (with no Stationers' Register entry) in 1594, *Locrine* in 1595, *The Famous Victories of Henry V* and *James IV* in 1598, and *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* in 1599.⁵² As G.M. Pinciss observes, 'no acted play entered or printed by Creede before 1600 is claimed on its title page for any company other than the Queen's, and only four plays attributed to this company were not published by him', which Pinciss names as *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, *The Old Wives Tale*, and 'Valentine and Orson'.⁵³ Creede's strategies in publishing historical

⁵¹ In this entry on 14 May, 'the Historye of ffryer Bacon and ffryer Bounge', 'the most famous Chronicle historye of Leire', 'the famous historye of John of Gaunte', 'the booke of David and Bethsaba', and 'a pastorall plesant Commedie of Robin Hood and Little John' are entered to White, replacing Adam Islip. The first two plays are from the Queen's Men. Arber, II, p.649.

⁵² While the connection of *Locrine*, *James IV*, and *Alphonsus* to the Queen's Men is more tenuous (particularly as, unlike the other plays referenced, they lack title-page attributions), these plays share parallels in style, possible casting patterns, and the involvement of Thomas Creede, making this company the most probable for attribution purposes. See G.M. Pinciss, 'Thomas Creede and the Repertory of the Queen's Men, 1583-1592', *Modern Philology*, 67:4 (1970), 321-30.

⁵³ Pinciss, p.322. A Stationers' Register entry on 23 May 1595 (and another on 31 March 1600) describe 'an enterlude of Valentyne and Orsson' as 'plaid by hir maiesties Players' (Arber, II, p.298; III, p.159).

drama draw attention to the position of the Queen's Men in his enterprise, as suggested by the incorporation of regular title-page attributions to the company and similarly aligned paratextual materials.

While Barley is listed as the bookseller for only one of Creede's history plays (*The True Tragedy of Richard III*), he is credited in the colophon in many of Creede's other dramatic and non-dramatic publications, including *A Looking Glass for London and England* (1594), *Menaechmi* (1595), *The Pedlar's Prophecy* (1595), and Henry Robert's *The Trumpet of Fame* (1595). Holger Syme suggests a possible publishing syndicate between Barley as a bookseller and the printers Creede, John Danter, and Abel Jeffes, observing that Barley may have provided financial backing for Creede's own publications, which remained a prominent part of Creede's trade until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when he started to concentrate on printing texts for other stationers, rather than also acting as a publisher.⁵⁴ Moreover, Barley was a draper, which prevented him from becoming a member of the Stationers' Company and entering texts for publication. This restriction necessitated a working relationship with other stationers, making it likely that Barley invested in the other history plays published by Creede.

In examining the relationship between Creede and Barley, and their possible cooperation in the publication of history plays from the Queen's Men, it is especially revealing to consider the physical locations of their businesses and their spatial relationship to the theatrical scene in London. While the first record of Barley as a bookseller dates from 1591 in Newgate Market, he opened his main premises at the upper end of Gracechurch Street, near Leadenhall, shortly after, and in 1593, Creede set up his printing house at the sign of the Catherine Wheel near the Old Swan in Thames Street, and in close proximity to Barley's premises. At this

A play of the same name ('Vallentyne & orsen') was acquired by the Admiral's Men on 19 July 1598 (Foakes (ed.), p.93).

⁵⁴ 'Thomas Creede, William Barley, and the Venture of Printing Plays', in *Shakespeare's Stationers*, ed. by Straznicky, pp.28-46.

time, the majority of the London book trade was concentrated in St Paul's Churchyard, and so Creede's and Barley's trading locations are somewhat removed from this centre of industry. They are situated on what can be described as a theatrical thoroughfare, extending from the Rose theatre (and Newington Butts) on the south bank of the Thames, across London Bridge, and northwards along Gracechurch Street, passing by the Cross Keys Inn, the Bell Inn, and the Bull Inn, and ending with the Theatre and the Curtain, both north of the city walls. Barley's shop is in the immediate vicinity of the Cross Keys and the Bell Inn, playing venues associated with the Queen's Men and thus well-positioned to encourage trade from passing playgoers. Creede's business at the east end of Thames Street is very close to these venues; however, as it was a printing shop, Creede would not have stocked and sold plays from this location, relying instead on the facilities of a bookseller, such as Barley.

Although not featured in this chapter, the bookshop of Thomas Millington, the publisher responsible for the first editions of *The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster* (1594) and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (1595) held premises under St Peter's Church. Millington's and Barley's shops were almost adjacent, which suggests they may have been strongly influenced by each other's publications and investments in plays from the commercial theatres. While the market for playbooks and the stationers responsible for the production of history plays would move closer to St Paul's by the early seventeenth century, at this nascent period in the market's establishment, the main publishers and booksellers of professional plays were collected on this theatrical thoroughfare in London, demonstrating the importance of spatial proximity in developing the market for playbooks, and its role in encouraging trade, establishing business relationships between stationers and, possibly, in the acquisition of copy by publishers.

In travelling between theatrical venues, actors and company sharers would regularly pass along this thoroughfare, and the locations of Creede's and Barley's businesses may have assisted in their acquisition of plays from the Queen's Men and in establishing a connection

with this company. How Creede obtained the plays from the Queen's Men remains a matter of considerable speculation; this chapter has argued against the transmission of plays from the Queen's Men as indicative of failing company fortunes or an attempt to advertise the return of regular playing patterns in London, and, instead, has suggested the pre-eminence of the Queen's Men and the burgeoning potential for a market in professional playbooks as a motive for their publication. Such a premise could involve greater or lesser degrees of company agency and cooperation, and what is foregrounded in this chapter is the primacy of stationers in shaping the play as *playbook*, offering local examples of historical engagement, and creating an identity for the Queen's Men in print.

The idea that a specific positioning agenda influenced the publication of history plays from the Queen's Men in the 1590s is further supported by a consideration of Creede's wider published output, most of which dates from 1593 to 1600. David Gants estimates that two-thirds of Creede's output as a printer during this period is self-published.⁵⁵ In his investments, Creede tended to specialize in short, topical texts, including pamphlet accounts of recent (and strange) events (such as *The most wonderful and strange finding of a chair of gold*, 1595), English and French histories (most notably, accounts of the French Wars of Religion, including *The mutable and wavering estate of France, from the year of our Lord 1460, until the year 1595*, 1597) and Protestant sermons (such as Ludwig Lavater's *Three Christian Sermons*, 1595), although he did publish some prominent literary works including English translations of Plautus's *Menaechmi* (in 1595 by 'W.W.', possibly William Warner), Virgil's *Aeneid* (in 1596 by Thomas Phayer and Thomas Twyne) and More's *Utopia* (in 1597 by Ralph Robinson). Creede also acted as the trade printer for works connected to the Sidney circle, including the authorized first edition of Sidney's *Defence of Poetry*, published by William Ponsonby in 1595 (STC 22535), which may have informed his interest in other prestigious works, such as the translations of Plautus, Virgil, and More. Creede's dual publishing

⁵⁵ 'Creede, Thomas (*b.* in or before 1554, *d.* 1616)', *ODNB*, para.2

emphasis seems to be in literary works connected to prominent individuals (these attributions being advertised through title-page paratexts), alongside ephemeral, topical, and Protestant-orientated pamphlets, making his connection with the Queen's Men and their history plays, which appear overtly to promote a Protestant alignment and highlight a patronage connection to Elizabeth, well-suited to his overall publishing strategies. Indeed, Creede was one of the stationers employed by the government during the so-called Appellant controversy (1598 to 1602) to print books from the Appellants, a small group of dissident Catholic priests. This strategy was to further divide the two parties of Roman Catholics and expose the development of their contentions for England's political advantage. As members of the Queen's Men also seem to have been involved in government service, there is a parallel between Thomas Creede and the Queen's company in terms of their political orientation and possible government connections.⁵⁶

Similarly, as a bookseller, Barley appears to have specialized in topical and historical publications throughout the 1590s, and is listed as the wholesaler for Protestant and anti-Spanish pamphlets (including *The honourable actions of that most famous and valiant Englishman, Edward Glemham, Esquire; Lately obtained against the Spaniards and the Holy League*, [1591]); Protestant sermons (including *God's Arrow Against Atheists*, [1593], by Henry Smith, the 'Silver-Tongued Preacher' who was patronized by William Cecil, Lord Burghley); and plays such as *Edward I* (printed by Abel Jeffes in 1593) and *Jack Straw* (printed by John Danter in 1594), both of which promote Protestant and politically conservative readings through their printed features.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ The three books from the Appellants printed by Creede in 1601 are I.B.'s *The Hope or Peace* (STC 1884), George Blackwell's *Relatio Compendiosa Turbarum quas Iesuitae Angli Vna cum D.G. Blackwello Sacerdotibus Seminariorum Cociuere* (STC 3106), and the anonymous *The Copies of Certain Discourses* (STC 5724). See Akihiro Yamada, *Thomas Creede: Printer to Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Tokyo: Meisei University Press, 1994), pp.7-8.

⁵⁷ The title page of *Jack Straw* gives 1593 as the year of publication, while the colophon specifies 1594. The play was entered in the Stationers' Register on 23 October 1593, and it is likely that the text was published in early 1594. In the Julian calendar, the change in year was often not recorded until 25 March (Lady Day), which possibly accounts for the two different dates in the quarto edition. Gary W. Jenkins, 'Smith, Henry (c.1560–1591)', *ODNB*, para.1.

The presentation of the 1594 edition of *Jack Straw*, printed by Danter and ‘solde by William Barley at his shop in Gracious-street’, appears to propagate royalist sympathies and condemn rebellion, although the play as a whole can be seen as offering a challenging and potentially subversive dramatization of the Peasants’ Revolt in 1391.⁵⁸ Danter entered *Jack Straw* in the Stationers’ Register on 23 October 1593, which establishes his publication rights to the title. This entry suggests that he took on the role of the play’s publisher and had the greatest agency in its re-presentation as a printed playbook. As Stephen Schillinger argues, Danter’s edition of *Jack Straw* ‘ignores evidence that the play was perceived as apologetic to the rebel position’; Jack Straw is described on the title page as a ‘notable Rebell in England’ (A2r), and Richard II’s black-letter proclamation against the rebels, which departs from the rest of the play’s roman type, suggests a connection with official declarations against rebels and civil uprising, which were usually printed in black letter.⁵⁹ This proclamation is, moreover, separated from the rest of the text: it is printed on a new page and quire (F1r-v) under the heading ‘The Kings Pardon deliuered by Sir Iohn Morton to the Rebels’, and the head ornament on F1r contains Danter’s initials. The unusual presentation of this part of the play possibly indicates that it was brought to the printing house as a separate document (and one that had been read aloud on stage), as Stern has explored in connection to prologues, epilogues, and songs.⁶⁰ As part of the printed playbook, the distinctive appearance of the King’s pardon demands the reader’s attention and the addition of Danter’s initials in the ornament effectively announces his agency in its presentation.

The use of black letter in the proclamation together with the phrasing and *mise en page* of the title page also resemble Thomas Lodge’s account of William fitz Osbert, *The Life and Death of William Long Beard* (printed in 1593 by Richard Yardley and Peter Short), which recounts the activities of a London citizen who orchestrated a popular uprising in 1196 in defence of

⁵⁸ *The life and death of Iacke Straw* (STC 23356, 1593 [i.e. 1594]), A2r.

⁵⁹ Schillinger, ‘Begging at the Gate: *Jack Straw* and the Acting Out of Popular Rebellion’, *MRDE*, 21 (2008), 87-127 (p.89).

⁶⁰ Stern, *Documents*, chp.4 and 5.

the poor, and shares significant thematic parallels with *Jack Straw*. William Long Beard is described as an ‘English traitor’, and the account serves as ‘a glasse for all sorts to looke into, wherein the high minded may learne to know the meane, and corrupt consciences may reade the confusion of their wickednes’.⁶¹ Danter’s presentation of *Jack Straw* perhaps draws on this earlier publication, encouraging an interpretation of the play that condemns rebellion and promotes the use of such accounts as warnings for contemporary readers. This presentation contrasts with Thomas Pavier’s 1604 edition of *Jack Straw*, which repositions the text to suggest a reading sympathetic to the rebels. The repositioning is most clearly indicated by Pavier’s addition of a title-page woodcut ornament that contains his initials and shows a labouring agricultural worker with the inscription ‘Thov shalt labor till thov retvrne to dvste’.⁶² These readings highlight the interpretative potential of the plays’ *mise en page* and paratextual materials, specifically the title-page descriptions and woodcut ornaments. While these paratexts are not as elaborate or extensive as those accompanying the second edition of *Gorboduc* (which opened this chapter) or Jones’s 1590 edition of *Tamburlaine*, they nevertheless point towards specific, local interpretations of the plays, which have implications for the plays’ reception, marketability, and position within the book trade.

Focusing in more detail on Creede and the history plays from the Queen’s Men reveals a similar promotional strategy in the design of the paratexts, which suggests that Creede, as both printer and publisher, may have exerted greatest agency in the composition and presentation of these materials. As discussed in the introduction, determining agency in the composition of playbook paratexts (especially title pages) is difficult; dramatists, playbill printers, and publishers could influence the content and presentation of title pages. However, in the case of Creede’s publications from the Queen’s Men, it is reasonable to hypothesize that Creede occupied the position of greatest agency. Creede entered most of these plays in the Stationers’ Register (which establishes his ownership of the titles and supports his identification as

⁶¹ Thomas Lodge, *The life and death of william Long beard* (STC 16659, 1593), E1r.

⁶² *The life and death of Iacke Straw* (STC 23357: 1604), A1r.

publisher). Moreover, the presentation of Creede's 1594 title pages (the focus of this section) reveals a consistent design, which indicates his involvement. Creede's playbooks advertise their connection to the Queen's Men, display his principal ornament (McKerrow 299, discussed later), and emphasize aspects of their plots (through lengthy plot descriptions) that tend to promote a royalist or Protestant interpretation. As a point of contrast, the title page of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, which was published in 1594 by Edward White, does not share the same parallels in *mise en page*, title-page ornament, or play description.⁶³ Creede's patterns of engagement with plays from the Queen's Men are consistent, suggesting he may have directed the playbooks' appearance, title-page descriptions, and interpretative orientation in ways that have affected the repertorial identity of the company.

Through its 1594 title page, *Selimus*, possibly written by Robert Greene, draws attention to the immorality of this emperor of the Turks, describing how he 'most vnnaturally raised warres against his owne father', 'caused him to be poysoned', and murdered 'his two brethren' (A2r, see Figure 1).⁶⁴ The paratexts of the 'most tyrannicall Tragedie and raigne of Selimus' (A3r) present the title character as the single source of unrest and corruption in the play, and highlight the play's topicality in relation to the alleged assassination attempt on Elizabeth's life in 1593, as noted by Kewes.⁶⁵ In the play (and advertised on the title page), Selimus enlists the service of 'Abraham the Iew' (G3r-v) to poison his father, Bajazet, introducing a parallel with the accusations of attempted poisoning against Elizabeth's Jewish physician, Roderigo Lopez, which had spurred a series of publications and pamphlets, including an official account from the government following his execution in June 1594.⁶⁶

⁶³ The title page to White's edition describes the play succinctly as 'The Honorable Historie of frier Bacon and frier Bongay', and does not contain an ornament that encourages a particular interpretation, unlike Creede's.

⁶⁴ *Selimus* was issued anonymously in 1594. Attribution evidence rests on stylistic analysis and a suggestion of Greene's authorship in *England's Parnassus* (1600), which contains six extracts from the play, quoted above Greene's name. Many of the passages in *England's Parnassus* are misattributed, however, so the association with Greene cannot be taken as conclusive. See *The Tragical Reign of Selimus*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1908, repr.1964), pp.v-vi.

⁶⁵ Kewes, 'Elizabethan History Play', p.176.

⁶⁶ William Cecil, *A trve report of syndry horrible conspiracies* (STC 7603, 1594). Cf. Edgar Samuel, 'Lopez, Roderigo (c.1517–1594)', *ODNB*, para.7.

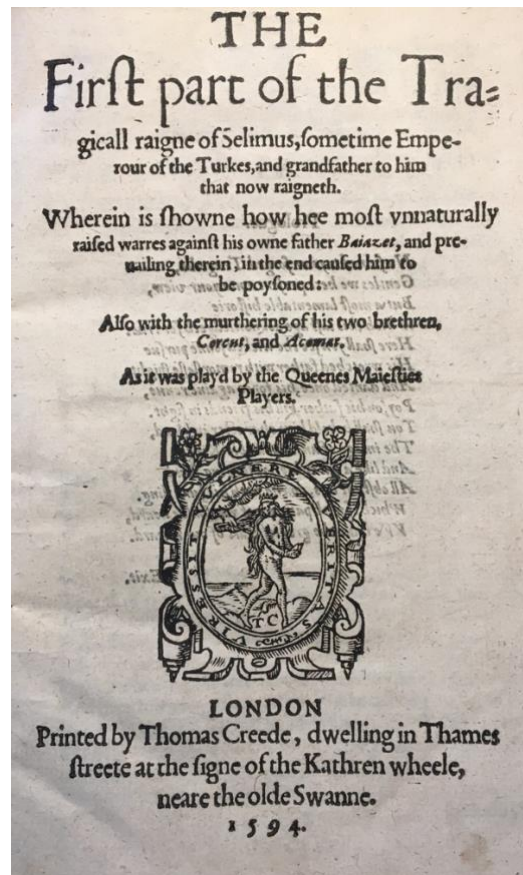


Figure 1: Title page from *Selimus* (1594)

The title page of *Selimus* compresses the source of instability and corruption into a single figure and, in doing so, elides the various complexities within the play, glossing over the other power struggles, betrayals, and usurpations that take place, notably by Selimus's brother, Acomat, who is arguably even more tyrannical and extreme than Selimus, but who is represented on the title page with pathos as an unnaturally murdered brother. Similarly, the play's prologue concentrates on Selimus's wickedness and 'remorselesse spight', which have spurred 'a most lamentable historie | Which this last age acknowledgeth for true' (A2v). While prologues, as Stern has demonstrated, were not always spoken in performance, they acquired a new interpretative fixity when attached to a printed playbook, in this case furthering the condemnatory judgement of the title page.⁶⁷ In fact, Selimus's dominance over the play, suggested by the title page and prologue, is belied by his absence from the drama between

⁶⁷ Stern, *Documents*, pp.81-119.

C4v and F4v (spanning about ten scenes and over 800 lines of dialogue), during which time Acomat assumes the central position and enacts various atrocities that surpass Selimus's later brutality, especially given their visual representation on stage. In a scene which possibly influenced Shakespeare's depiction of the blinding of Gloucester in *King Lear*, Acomat, with the assistance of Regan, blinds the loyal advisor Aga and cuts off both his hands, before sending him back to Bajazet with a warning.⁶⁸ The stage directions in the 1594 quarto specify that these actions be shown on stage, indicating the moments when Acomat '*Puls out [Aga's] eyes*' and '*They [i.e. Acomat and Regan] cut off[f] his hands*' (F2v-F3r), and creating a tableau of extreme brutality which is the most significant and sustained visual representation of tyrannical action in the play. Selimus's more moderate tactics to gain power are derided by Acomat, whose sudden and insatiable desire for 'the crowne' (F2r) propels him into bringing about emblematic moments of physical violence that promote civil destruction, including the murder of his nephews and the massacre of his subjects in an attempt to suppress all opposition:

He [Selimus] should haue done as I meane to do,
 Fill all the confines, with fire, sword and blood.
 Burne vp the fields, and ouerthrow whole townes,
 And when he had endammaged that way,
 Then teare the old man peecemeale with my teeth,
 And colour my strong hands with his gore-blood
 [...]
 It is the greatest glorie of a king
 When, though his subjects hate his wicked deeds
 Yet are they forst to bear them all with praise. [F2r-v]

Acomat's switching of pronouns in this exclamation (from 'And when *he* had endammaged that way, | Then teare the old man peecemeale with *my* teeth') shows how Acomat's assessment of what Selimus should have enacted becomes an envenomed declaration of his own intended actions. In contrast to Acomat's view that 'hate is peculiar to a princes state' (F2v), Selimus has the support of the people, as well as many of the main advisors, and he is recognized as a strong military leader. While he does eventually eliminate all opposition through orchestrating the deaths of his father and brothers, Selimus's actions are not presented

⁶⁸ Cf. Shakespeare, *King Lear* (STC 22292, 1608), H1r-H2r.

in ways that surpass the visual impact and extremity of Acomat's, and what emerges is a state plagued by repeated power struggles between different factions. There is no overriding villain (as the paratextual materials seem to suggest) to contrast with a benign and effective alternative, but instead, slightly different models of usurpation and brutality, emerging from a state governed by the politically ineffectual Bajazet.

The ways in which *Selimus* connects Turkish history with England during the 1590s complicates any suggestion that the play emphasizes a discontinuity between English and Turkish political events. The poisoning of Bajazet parallels the alleged attempt of Roderigo Lopez to poison Elizabeth I and, as Kewes observes, the scenes involving the clown, Bullithrubble, invoke a familiar English landscape in the midst of the unfamiliar foreign setting of the play, further dissolving the boundaries between native and foreign, and problematizing a critical concentration on 'English' history plays.⁶⁹ *Selimus* is infused with English colloquialisms, social descriptions, and place names (such as 'Holburne vp Tiburne', H4r), in addition to the Anglicized clown figure, Bullithrubble. As Rackin argues in *Stages of History*, Elizabethan clowns tended to be topical, frequently using contemporary colloquialisms and making references to current issues, and therefore served to elide a distinction between past and present, as well as native and foreign, in the history play.⁷⁰

Encouraging topical readings, *Selimus* highlights the continuities between English and Turkish politics, drawing attention to threats of invasion, uprising, and regicide, and the pervasiveness of political instability and corruption, which the title page attempts to redirect and compress into the single figure of Selimus. Indeed, this facility for contemporary application can be witnessed in the manuscript circulation in 1603 of Selimus's speech (beginning 'When first this circled round, this building faire' [B3r-v]), which contained an attribution to Sir Walter Raleigh under the heading 'Certaine hellish verses devysed by that

⁶⁹ Kewes, 'Elizabethan History Play', p.176.

⁷⁰ Rackin, pp.206-07.

Atheist and traitor Raleigh'.⁷¹ This example of a topical reading and appropriation (which relates to the accusations against Raleigh for colluding with Spain in an attempt to dethrone James I) depends upon the villainous interpretation of Selimus that is heightened by the play's paratexts.

This reading contrasts significantly with the 1638 title page for *Selimus*, which was added to the unsold copies from 1594. The 1638 version omits the overt moralizations of the earlier title page and removes the 1594 prologue (A2v), which had been printed on the verso of the 1594 title page and had further highlighted Selimus's wickedness. The 1638 title page suggests a grandeur to the central character that is more in line with the presentation of *Tamburlaine* in its early quarto editions, describing the play as 'The Tragedy of Selimvs Emperour of the Turkes'.⁷² Indeed, *Tamburlaine* was a significant theatrical and print precedent for *Selimus*, which is apparent in the latter play's thematic and stylistic engagement with (and ostensible condemnation of) a Tamburlainean conqueror. However, despite the play's attempt to reject *Tamburlaine*'s amoral model, the 1594 edition of *Selimus* draws on the popularity of Marlowe's play as a two-part drama. Although there are no records of a second part in either performance or print, the title page describes the play as 'The First part of the Tragicall raigne of Selimus' (A2r) and the epilogue refers to the potential for a continuation, indicating the desire of the dramatist (possibly Greene) and the Queen's Men to capitalize on the successful Tamburlainean model, which spurred a series of imitative two-part plays. This connection is promoted in Creede's printed edition, at the same time as suggesting an oppositional model in relation to *Tamburlaine*'s political positioning and representation of rebellion.

⁷¹ Jean Jacquot, 'Raleigh's "Hellish Verses" and the "Tragicall Raigne of Selimus"', *Modern Language Review*, 48:1 (1953), 1-9 (p.1).

⁷² Robert Greene (?)/Anon. (attributed to 'T.G.'), *The Tragedy of Selimvs* (STC: 12310b, 1638), cancel title-page.

The anonymous *True Tragedy of Richard III* similarly posits a particular reading through its paratextual material that contrasts with the play's greater complexities, some of which would be especially apparent in performance through theatrical practices such as doubling. The title page announces the veracity of the play's treatment of history by drawing attention to the word 'True', which is presented in large type at the top of the page (A2r) and contained as part of the running title throughout the text. This epithet, however, is not featured in the Stationers' Register, which records the play as 'an enterlude intituled | The Tragedie of Richard the Third'.⁷³ It is probable that this descriptive term was added to the printed playbook. McMillin and MacLean propose that plays from the Queen's Men frequently insist upon the truthfulness of their dramatizations and advocate a Protestant plainness in speech, but this feature is perhaps more clearly and emphatically a characteristic of the plays in print, as in *The True Tragedy of Richard III*.⁷⁴ Indeed, the appearance of Creede's principal ornament (McKerrow 299) on all of his publications from the Queen's Men encourages this interpretative connection between the plays and the promotion of truth (see Figure 1).⁷⁵ This woodcut shows the figure of Truth being scourged by a descending hand from the clouds, with the initials 'T.C.' (Thomas Creede) and the inscription '*Viressit [sic] vulnere veritas*' (meaning 'Truth flourishes though wounded'). Although Creede used this ornament on other publications, it carries particular significance on printed plays associated with the Queen's Men because of the connection it implies between the promotion of truth and the plays from Elizabeth's company. Moreover, the title page of *The True Tragedy* also draws attention to key narrative developments that promote a Tudor apologia, appealing to a sense of injustice at the 'smothering of the two yoong Princes in the Tower' and anticipating the 'coniunction and ioyning of the two noble Houses, Lancaster and Yorke' (A2r) with the marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. The phrasing of this last example echoes the title of Edward Hall's providentially-inclined Tudor chronicle, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of*

⁷³ Arber, II, p.654.

⁷⁴ McMillin and MacLean, p.33.

⁷⁵ Ronald McKerrow, *Printers' & Publishers' Devices in England & Scotland, 1485-1640* (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society at the Chiswick Press, 1913), p.117.

Lancaster and York (1548), which further aligns the play with a project of Tudor mythologizing.

However, as in *Selimus*, the seemingly straightforward representation implied by the paratextual materials is complicated by a closer examination of the play. Walsh draws attention to the play's demystification of 'its own history-making by showing it to be the work of the players on stage'.⁷⁶ The induction involving the characters Truth and Poetry appears to suggest a 'Protestant drive for substantial truth and plain speech' but the role of Truth in the representation of history that follows is ambiguous.⁷⁷ Poetry asks 'will Truth be a Player' (A3r), and indeed, in light of the doubling practices of theatrical companies, both Truth and Poetry would have become players in the main dramatization, as the actors performing these roles would have reappeared in other parts, thus visually complicating the plainness and transparency of Truth and the play's depiction of a univocal history.

As Walsh observes, *The True Tragedy* points to the fallibility and 'belatedness of historical narratives', and by extension, complicates the narrative the rest of the play tries to promote.⁷⁸ The figure of Report, who allegorizes the historian, arrives after the Battle of Bosworth, which suggests the writing of history is flawed, belated, and partial, and reflects contemporary historiographical discourses, such as Fleming's preface to Holinshed's *Chronicles*, discussed in the introduction. The Page frames Richard's death as a classical paradigm, telling Report how 'Richard came to fielde mounted on horsback, with as high resolute as fierce Achillis mongst the sturdie Greekes' and that 'worthie Richard that did neuer flie, but followed honour to the gates of death, straight spurd his horse to encounter with the Earle [... and] would not yeeld, but with his losse of life he lost the field' (H3v). The Page rejuvenates Richard's reputation in his 'report', departing from the dichotomized moral structure the play has

⁷⁶ Walsh, *Shakespeare*, p.101.

⁷⁷ McMillin and MacLean, p.33.

⁷⁸ Walsh, *Shakespeare*, p.88.

heretofore upheld to suggest a more fluid classical model that privileges neither Richard nor Richmond. While the play ostensibly remains a Protestant campaign for Tudor legitimacy, most notably through its overt statements of political orientation in, for example, the concluding prognostication and its explicit condemnation of Richard as ‘a man ill shaped, crooked backed, lame armed’ and ‘tyrannous in authoritie’ (A3v), the play also exposes the partiality of historical writing and, by implication, questions the truthfulness of its own representations.

For early readers, this tension is further suggested through the presentation of speech prefixes. While stationers, such as Creede, would not have determined these designations, supplied instead by the underlying manuscript copy (which stationers may have expanded or contracted), the printed presentation of the prefixes within the new context of a playbook to be read, rather than a play script to be utilized, transfers an interpretative significance to their appearance and patterning. In the case of *The True Tragedy*, these prefixes add to the play’s complication of its providential and celebratory narrative of Tudor accession. Of all the characters who could be introduced as ‘King’, only Richmond (the future Henry VII) is not given this prefix. Instead, the designation ‘King’ is initially assigned to Edward IV until his death, and is then successively inherited by the eldest Prince (despite the fact he is not actually crowned before his murder in the Tower of London), and then by Richard, which he retains until his death at the Battle of Bosworth. The speech prefixes seem to mirror the transition of monarchic authority and it is notable that Richmond, the historical individual celebrated as the legitimate successor responsible for uniting the divided families of York and Lancaster and inaugurating the Tudor line, does not inherit the prefix ‘King’, which is attributed to all the other claimants at some point in the play. While not necessarily part of a defined strategy, these prefix patterns suggest a tension between the celebratory and ‘true’ Tudor history and the prevalence of alternative historical narratives that may demythologize such accounts.

As a final example, this tension between the paratextual materials and the greater complexities suggested by the main text is also apparent in *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, often regarded as the first English history play and performed by the Queen's Men at some point between 1583 and 1587.⁷⁹ The play was entered by Creede in the Stationers' Register on 14 May 1594, but was not published until 1598. The title page nevertheless employs a similar strategy to the 1594 plays, promoting the 'Famous Victories' and 'Honourable Battell of Agin-court'.⁸⁰ The paratexts suggest the play constitutes a patriotic panegyric to a celebrated monarch, which would be particularly relevant in the years following the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the continuation of hostilities with Spain. Creede's decision to print the play in black-letter type is also significant, particularly as his other dramatic publications are in roman type. As Zachary Lesser suggests, the use of black letter could serve to cultivate a nostalgia for a lost chivalric and English past, and in this case, could further the celebratory nationalism of the play's paratexts.⁸¹

However, the play itself complicates this patriotic view, and instead of focusing on, as the paratexts suggest, 'Honourable' military exploits and the victories of Henry V, the play foregrounds Henry's transition from prince to monarch in social and political spheres that highlight monarchical exploitation, and a relatively small section of the play concentrates on the 'Battell of Agin-court'. Critics have often described the play as a glorification of monarchy, Henry emerging as an ideal prince at the point of his sudden repentance on his father's deathbed. However, this reading has potentially been influenced by a critical tendency to diminish the complexities of plays that are associated with a Shakespearian

⁷⁹ The dating of the play's first performances draws on an anecdote concerning Tarlton doubling the parts of Dericke and the Lord Chief Justice, with William Knell as Henry V. As Knell was killed in a duel in June 1587 and Tarlton died in 1588, the play must have been first performed at some point between the company's formation in 1583 and mid-1587. See Chiaki Hanabusa (ed.), *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, Malone Society Reprints, vol. 171 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp.xx-xxii.

⁸⁰ *The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth* (STC 13072, 1598), A1r. Further references will be given after quotations.

⁸¹ 'Typographic Nostalgia: Play-Reading, Popularity and the Meanings of Black Letter', in *Book of the Play*, ed. by Straznicky, pp.99-126.

equivalent (in this case, *Henry V*).⁸² A more troubling dramatization of Henry V's accession and rule can be detected throughout the play, as in, for example, his disregard for public welfare, which would have been especially apparent to the socially-mixed early modern audience, as Larry Champion suggests.⁸³ Unlike Shakespeare's representation of the same monarch, *The Famous Victories* shows Henry as the instigator and ringleader of the robbery of his father's Receivers, and his reformation is, as Champion observes, 'more politically expedient than genuine'.⁸⁴

This disruptive presentation is further heightened by the 'reformation' scene where Henry enters wearing a 'cloake [...] full of needles' ('a signe that I stand vpon thorns, til the Crowne be on my head') and carrying a 'dagger in his hand' (C1v-C2v) in preparation for murdering his father, a plan that is thwarted by his father's sudden awakening, which potentially motivates Henry's expedient repentance. Henry's military engagements in France, moreover, suggest a concern for aristocratic interests and personal glorification, and the subplot involving Dericke and John Cobbler complicates the 'Honourable' claims of the title page in the scenes dramatizing their exploits on the battlefield, which amount to removing shoes and valuables from the French and English casualties (F4v-G1v). The play looks beyond, as Champion argues, the 'monarchophilia and patriotic glitter', revealing a 'sordid world of political treachery and crass manipulation in which putative honour bows to greed'.⁸⁵ These aspects of the play are not suggested through the title-page paratexts, which concentrate on military victories and honourable action, and put forward a nationalistic interpretation of the play that prospective buyers and future readers would encounter as they browsed the London bookstalls and started to engage with the text.

⁸² Critics including Tillyard (in *Shakespeare's History Plays*), Ribner (in *The English History Play*), and Madeleine Doran (in *Endeavours of Art: A Study of Form in Elizabethan Drama*) have stressed the play's celebratory patriotism and upholding of Henry V as a national hero.

⁸³ "'What Prerogatiues Meanes": Perspective and Political Ideology in *The Famous Victories of Henry V*', *South Atlantic Review*, 53:4 (1988), 1-19 (pp.2-4).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.7-8.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.5.

An examination of Creede's playbooks from the Queen's Men suggests a tendency for a politically conservative position or reading to be announced in the plays' paratexts that does not reflect the fuller complexities of the plays, made most apparent in performance. As Walsh discusses, the company's initial interest in history may have been 'driven by Ciceronian principles about the didactic powers of history', but 'the company's actual plays work to complicate the use of history to promote stable political messages'.⁸⁶ The position of the Queen's Men as a royalist and Protestant company can be more precisely attributed to an initial formative impulse that continued to exert a degree of influence on their historical engagement and also to the strategies of printed editions, which seem to highlight these aspects through their paratexts, while the plays themselves are less clearly and consistently works of political propaganda.

Although the precise nature of the connection between the stationers, Creede and Barley, and the Queen's Men remains uncertain, possibly involving a collaborative relationship or a more indirect association depending largely on stationer agency in the pursuit of a publication opportunity, this 'network' contributed to the centrality of history plays in the emerging readerly market for professional plays, while also drawing attention to the influence of playbook positioning strategies. The publication associations between Creede, Barley, and the Queen's Men, together with the strategies employed in the presentation of their playbooks, encourage a particular view of the company's repertory and politics, and the position of the history play in alignment with the queen's company.

Indeed, Creede appears alert to the possibilities for different playbook publication strategies, which is suggested by his wider output. Prior to his concentration on plays from the Queen's Men, Creede published Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene's *A Looking Glass for London and England* (played by Strange's Men), which incorporates a prominent title-page attribution to

⁸⁶ Walsh, *Shakespeare*, p.31.

the authors: ‘Made by Thomas Lodge Gentleman, and Robert Greene In Artibus Magister’.⁸⁷ This emphasis is similarly echoed by the play’s description in the Stationers’ Register, which is entered to Creede: ‘a booke intituled the looking glasse for london / by Tho. lodg. And Robert Greene gentlemen’.⁸⁸ As well as signalling the publication of Creede’s first professional playbook, this entry on 5 March 1594 constitutes the first occasion on which dramatists’ names were included within the Register for any commercial play and it is probable that *A Looking Glass* was the first professional playbook to contain a title-page attribution that refers to the dramatists’ identity and status.⁸⁹ Prior to the publication of *A Looking Glass*, Creede had printed books for William Ponsonby, a publisher and bookseller who specialized in texts from prominent and aristocratic writers, including Edmund Spenser, Philip Sidney, Mary Herbert, countess of Pembroke, and Robert Greene. In 1593, Creede had printed Greene’s *Gwydonius* and *Mamillia* (Part 2) for Ponsonby, both of which contain title-page references to Greene and his university education: ‘By Robert Greene Maister of Art, in Cambridge’.⁹⁰ While the involvement of Ponsonby as publisher suggests that Creede was merely hired as the printer on these occasions, having no investment in the books and likely having limited agency in their paratexts, his formative experience in printing texts by Greene and incorporating title-page attributions that highlighted a writer’s status possibly influenced Creede’s own publications, as well as his interest in Greene (as with *A Looking Glass*). In this way, the attributive practices of non-dramatic texts, especially involving aristocratic and university-educated writers, offered a strategy for selecting and promoting commercial playbooks, indicating the importance of looking beyond dramatic exempla when assessing publication patterns.

⁸⁷ *A looking glasse for London and England* (STC 16679, 1594), A2r.

⁸⁸ Arber, II, p.645.

⁸⁹ The first commercial playbook to reference the status or university education of its dramatist is George Peele’s *Edward I* (1593), and is recorded in the colophon at the end of the text (‘*Yours. By George Peele Maister of Artes in Oxenford*’, L3v). No attribution is featured on the title page, which represents the most prominent promotional position, and the 1594 playbooks offer the first examples.

⁹⁰ *Gwydonius* (STC 12263, 1593), A1r; *Mamillia: The second part of the triumph of Pallas* (STC 12270, 1593), A1r.

Other stationers pursued these attributive practices in 1594, including John Danter with *The Wounds of Civil War*, Edward White with *The Massacre at Paris*, William Jones with *Edward II*, and Thomas Woodcock with *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. As presented in Appendix B, these playbooks involved extensive title-page attributions, referring to the dramatists, their gentlemanly status or university education, the theatrical company which performed the plays, and, by extension, specific aristocratic patrons (through the company naming). While most of the plays engage with historical subject matter, their prominent and innovatory attributions suggest that one of the main positioning strategies was to highlight the plays' connection to aristocratic patrons and gentlemanly or university-educated writers in an attempt to elevate the status of commercial plays as texts to be read. Although the playbooks were not published by the same stationer or group of stationers, which suggests individual efforts at publication rather than a network of agents, their attributive parallels draw attention to the similar strategies pursued by publishers as they engaged with the nascent playbook market. These strategies would be adopted, more successfully, by a later publishing venture involving stationer Andrew Wise (featured at length in Chapter 2).

While the 1594 history plays display various attempts at navigating an emerging market for commercial playbooks, none of the strategies appear to have been very successful on the basis of edition numbers and reprint rates. Creede's plays from the Queen's Men were not reprinted, nor were most of the playbooks that prioritized title-page attributions, with the exception of *Edward II* (Q2 1598, Q3 1612, Q4 1622), *A Looking Glass for London and England* (Q2 1598, Q3 1602, Q4 [1605?], Q5 1617), and *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (Q2 1630, Q3 1655), and the latter was not reprinted until 1630. Rather than being insignificant, however, these largely unsuccessful or ineffectual strategies at promotion are important for understanding the motivations, interests, and agency of stationers in selecting and presenting professional plays as texts to be read, and for highlighting local (and significant) interpretations of history plays, especially in relation to the network involving Thomas Creede and the plays from the Queen's Men.

‘I haue playd my parte’: Reassessing the history play through evidence of repertory patterns⁹¹

The publication peak of 1594, which consists mostly of history plays, constitutes a representation of performed plays for readers, and does not necessarily reflect the patterns of wider theatrical repertories. However, extant records and contemporary accounts suggest that history plays also occupied a prominent position on stage during the early 1590s. Henslowe’s *Diary*, which variously details the performances and financial revenue of Strange’s Men, Sussex’s Men, the Queen’s Men, and the Admiral’s Men at the Rose theatre, points to the centrality of historical subject matter and its success with audiences (on the basis of high performance takings). This view is supported by contemporary witnesses, such as Thomas Nashe, who claimed the subject matter of professional plays is ‘for the most part [...] borrowed out of our English Chronicles’.⁹² Published in 1592, his defence of the theatre in *Pierce Penniless* highlights topical and thematic aspects that are particularly prevalent in historical drama from this period and promotes the political import of engaging with the past:

[The plays] shewe the ill successe of treason, the fall of hastie climbers, the wretched end of vsurpers, the miserie of ciuill dissension, and how iust God is euermore in punishing of murther. [F3r-v]

Drawing on Nashe’s comments about the utility of the theatre in offering historical parallels for political issues, this section will consider historical dramatizations on stage during the early 1590s. It will concentrate on the position of history plays in the context of the extant evidence for the repertory of Lord Strange’s Men, which is not reflected in publication patterns. Pointing a distinction between the influences surrounding performance and publication, this section will consider how historical dramatizations from Strange’s Men suggest a different type of engagement to the printed plays from the Queen’s Men, and how an awareness of their repertory patterns draws attention to the fluidity of the history play as a genre.

⁹¹ George Peele, *The battell of Alcazar* (STC 19531, 1594), F1v. Further references will be given after quotations.

⁹² *Pierce Penillesse his supplication to the diuell* (STC 18373, 1592), F3r-v.

On the basis of extant records and accounts, Strange's Men may be the most significant company, aside from the Queen's Men, in the performance of history plays during the early 1590s, perhaps partly due to their position as one of the most distinguished companies of this period. Court records indicate that Strange's Men provided all the dramatic entertainment in the 1591-92 season (an unprecedented six performances), as well as the majority of plays in the 1592-93 season, during which they performed three times, the remaining two plays provided by Pembroke's Men.⁹³ Their performance run at the Rose theatre between 1592 and 1593 generated average performance revenues of over thirty-four shillings, a higher rate than the Admiral's Men received between 1594 and 1597 at the height of the so-called duopoly.⁹⁴ In a petition to the Privy Council (c.1592) in which Strange's Men requested permission to perform at 'our plaiehowse on the Banckside' because 'oure Companie is greate, and thearbie our chardge intollerable, in travellinge the Countrie', they indicate their preference for an established London base, but also the size of their company, pointing again to their professional pre-eminence, a position obscured by the paucity of their extant plays and the existence of only one playbook edition with a title-page attribution to the company (*Fair Em*, published in c.1591).⁹⁵

Despite limited efforts to promote and establish an identity for the company in print, extant records suggest the repertory patterns of Strange's Men were dominated by history plays. Henslowe's *Diary* provides performance accounts for Strange's Men at the Rose theatre from 19 February to 22 June 1592, and from 29 December 1592 to 1 February 1593, and during this time, about sixty percent of their plays and sixty-eight percent of their total performances

⁹³ Chambers *ES*, IV, pp.104-08.

⁹⁴ Syme, 'Meaning of Success', p.516. Syme records the average revenue of the Admiral's Men as ranging between twenty-three and thirty-two shillings per performance, while Strange's Men recorded incomes of over thirty-four shillings per performance at the Rose.

⁹⁵ Chambers *ES*, IV, pp.311-12. The title page of *Fair Em* is attributed to 'the right honourable the Lord Strange his seruants'. Anon./Robert Wilson(?), *A pleasant commodie of faire Em* (STC 7675, 1591), A1r.

engage with historical subject matter.⁹⁶ While such quantification is problematic, these calculations depending on an assessment of lost play titles and minimizing differences in dramatic treatment and style (which cannot be determined with confidence), many of the titles clearly indicate historical subjects, including ‘Pope Joan’, ‘Harry of Cornwall’, and ‘1 and 2 Tamar Cham’.⁹⁷

Performance records also indicate that history plays proved particularly successful for Strange’s Men: several plays confidently connected to the company (on the basis of references in Henslowe’s *Diary*), namely *1 Henry VI* (‘harey the vj’), *The Battle of Alcazar* (‘mvlllo mvlluco’), and *The Massacre at Paris* (‘the tragedy of the gvyes’), brought in some of the highest total and average receipts.⁹⁸ Indeed, *1 Henry VI* and *The Battle of Alcazar* were among the company’s most frequently performed plays (with seventeen and fourteen recorded performances, respectively).⁹⁹ Their success may have contributed to the company’s increased history play performance patterns in May 1592, including repeated Sunday performances of *The Battle of Alcazar* and *1 Henry VI*, which form, as will be discussed, a concentrated period of regular historical performances involving the same group of actors on the Rose stage and introduce parallels between the plays that complicate generic distinctions between different types of history.¹⁰⁰

In assessing the historical representatives from Strange’s Men, patterns can be suggested in relation to the style and interpretative possibilities of their repertory. Manley and MacLean describe the history plays from the company and their contemporary applications as being

⁹⁶ Statistics have been calculated using the performance records in the appendices of Manley and MacLean’s study of the company, *Lord Strange’s Men and Their Plays* (London: Yale University Press, 2014), p.339. The plays included within the history play calculation are *1 Henry VI*, *The Battle of Alcazar*, *The Jew of Malta*, ‘Titus Vespasianus’, ‘Mandeville’, *John of Bordeaux*, ‘Harry of Cornwall’, ‘1 and 2 Tamar Cham’, ‘Bindo and Richardo’, *The Massacre at Paris*, ‘The Tanner of Denmark’, ‘Zenobia’, ‘Pope Joan’, and ‘Constantine’.

⁹⁷ Cf. Manley and MacLean, pp.135-47.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.339.

⁹⁹ Foakes (ed.), pp.16-20.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.16-19.

characterized by ‘elements of scepticism, daring, heterodoxy, irenism, and *politique* thinking’ that ‘put them in dialogue with policies of the Elizabethan regime’, identifying a proclivity for dangerous and potentially subversive dramatizations, and suggesting that the company’s plays appear to reflect the politics of their patron, Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange.¹⁰¹ During the sixteenth century, the Stanley family was implicated in political controversies and accused of fluid religious allegiances (notably for Catholic sympathies and recusancy), and the plays from Strange’s Men seem to eschew the consensus-building strategies and political orthodoxy of the Queen’s Men in favour of engaging with controversial issues of governance and religion. While theatrical companies operated largely independently of their patrons, as Knutson argues, their initial formative impulse, possibly motivated by the company’s patron, likely exerted some influence over the style and political orientation of the repertory, though not to the extent of turning commercial companies into the mere ‘pawns of political agents’.¹⁰²

This tendency for challenging authority and taking dramatic risks is further suggested by surviving documents from 1589 that relate to the operations of the company. In a letter from Sir John Harte, Lord Mayor, to Burghley on 6 November 1589, the Lord Mayor describes how Strange’s Men ‘in very Contemptuous manner departing from me, went to the Crosse keys and played that afternoon, to the greate offence of the better sorte that knewe they were prohibited by order’.¹⁰³ Following this apparent infringement of authority, on 12 November 1589, a minute of the Privy Council describes the ‘inconvenience’ that ‘hathe growne’ through ‘comon playes and enterludes’ performed in London, where ‘the players take upon themselves to handle in their plaies certen matters of Divinytie and of State unfitt to be suffred’.¹⁰⁴ This attack on the theatre resulted in the appointment of specific authorities to view and approve

¹⁰¹ Manley and MacLean, pp.12-36, 217. Ferdinando Stanley succeeded his father as the fifth Earl of Derby from September 1593 until his sudden death in April 1594. During this time, the company was known as Derby’s Men; however, the designation ‘Strange’s Men’ is retained throughout this chapter.

¹⁰² Knutson, ‘What’s So Special About 1594?’, p.450.

¹⁰³ Chambers *ES*, IV, p.305.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p.306.

plays before they could be performed publicly, and may have been related to the actions and activities of Strange's Men during this period.

Moreover, the performance run of Strange's Men at the Rose theatre between February and June 1592, which constitutes the first surviving evidence of any professional company taking up residency at a London venue, coincides with an increase in complaints and criticism concerning the theatre. In a letter dated 25 February 1592, six days after Strange's Men began performing at the Rose, the Lord Mayor wrote to John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, about the 'daily and disorderlie exercise of a number of players & playeng houses', and a series of complaints continued at regular intervals until June 1592.¹⁰⁵ On 12 June 1592, a letter from Sir William Webbe, Lord Mayor, to Burghley describes a 'great disorder & tumult' that took place at 8pm on 11 June 'within the Borough of Southwark', claiming the individuals involved had 'assembled themselves by occasion & pretence of their meeting at a play, which bysides the breach of the Sabboth day giveth opportunitie of committing these & such lyke disorders'.¹⁰⁶ Response to this 'disorder' was swift; a Privy Council minute on 23 June 1592 records the injunction that 'there be noe playes used in anye place neere thereaboutes, as the Theator, Curtayne, or other usuall places where the same are comonly used, nor no other sorte of unlawfull or forbidden pastymes that drawe together the baser sorte of people'.¹⁰⁷ As indicated by Henslowe's accounts, Strange's Men immediately stopped performing at the Rose theatre; their last recorded performance until December of that year took place on 22 June, suggesting that their first documented residency in London was cut short by the authorities and that it was potentially connected to the nature of their engagement with historical subject matter and their playing patterns, which involved regular performances on

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.307-12.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.310.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.310-11.

Sundays.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the first plague notice for that year did not appear until 13 August, further indicating that playing was restrained for other reasons in June 1592.¹⁰⁹

At the time of the disturbance in June 1592, *The Battle of Alcazar* and *1 Henry VI* were performed on consecutive days, as they frequently were in the repertory patterns of Strange's Men.¹¹⁰ The relationship between these plays is significant, considering their performance proximity, the actors involved (notably Edward Alleyn, who probably performed the roles of Abdelmelec and Talbot during the early 1590s), and the nature of their historical materials. Contrasting with plays from the Queen's Men, which tend to offer an explicitly delineated resolution of their conflicts (but in which varying degrees of complication can be detected), these plays from Strange's Men point less securely to the conclusion of their dramatized troubles, leaving a greater sense of irresolution. In their respective engagements with recent European conflicts and medieval English monarchs, *The Battle of Alcazar* and *1 Henry VI* are rarely addressed together, yet an assessment of their parallel political applications, similar interrogation of historiographical methods, close proximity in the repertory patterns of Strange's Men, and their involvement of the same actors draw attention to the important connections between these plays, and challenge classificatory approaches that attempt to disavow and isolate these history plays.

Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*, performed by Strange's Men at the Rose on the basis of records in Henslowe's *Diary* to 'mvlllo mvlluco' (referring to the character Abdelmelec), and published in 1594 by Richard Bankworth (with an attribution to the Admiral's Men who later performed it at the Rose), depicts the recent events and conflicts over the Moroccan throne

¹⁰⁸ Between 19 February and 22 June 1592 (and especially during May and June), Strange's Men often performed on a Sunday, an added provocation that possibly motivated the authorities to demand a cessation of playing on 23 June. According to Henslowe's *Diary*, Sunday performances took place on 20 February, 30 April, 7 May, 14 May, 21 May, and 18 June 1592. Foakes (ed.), pp.16-19.

¹⁰⁹ Chambers *ES*, IV, p.347.

¹¹⁰ For example, 'harey the vj' and 'mvlemvloco' were performed on 12 and 13 June 1592. Foakes (ed.), p.19.

between Abdelmelec, King of Morocco, and the combined forces of the invading Muly Mahamet, King Sebastian of Portugal, and Captain Thomas Stukeley.¹¹¹ The historical battle took place on 4 August 1578, and had immediate and lasting consequences for the political situation in Europe, marking the play as a relatively unprecedented dramatization of recent European political history, unlike plays from the Queen's Men, which favour traditional, legendary, or Tudor history. In 1578, the victory of Abd al-Malek (Abdelmelec in the play) was partly due to the provision of artillery from England, with the two countries engaging in diplomatic and commercial negotiations. However, the defeat of Muly Muhammad al-Maslukh (Muly Mahamet) and his allies and, most significantly, the death of the Portuguese king, Sebastian, led to Philip II of Spain's accession to the Portuguese throne; as a contemporary observed, 'what is even more terrible is that this kingdom must now fall under Spanish rule'.¹¹² To a degree, England's loyalties in the conflict were ultimately divided. The success of Abd al-Malek's forces assisted the expansionist aims of Spain: Philip II soon controlled all of Iberia, and he promoted at least four assassination attempts against Elizabeth, as well as the launching of the Armada in 1588.¹¹³ The Portuguese monarchy continued to occupy a pivotal position in European politics in the aftermath of the Armada. In 1589, Elizabeth instructed John Norris and Francis Drake to restore the pretender Don Antonio to the Portuguese throne in an attempt to regain control of the area. Indeed, the political situation in both Morocco and Portugal exerted considerable influence on negotiations and allegiances during the period of the play's first performances, making it a highly topical engagement with a complex and continuingly consequential historical conflict.

¹¹¹ Critics have debated the correspondence between 'mvlllo mvlluco' in Henslowe's *Diary* and *The Battle of Alcazar*, published in 1594. Evidence suggests they represent the same play, as 'mvlllo mvlluvo' (Muly Molocco) was an alternative name for Abdelmelec, one of the play's main parts. This title record (with its numerous variant spellings in other entries) identifies both the play and the part possibly taken on by Alleyn in 1592-93, as Henslowe occasionally titled plays according to the part his son-in-law performed, entering 'Jeronymo' for *The Spanish Tragedy*. A surviving playhouse plot, entitled 'The Plott of the Battell of Alcazar', indicates that the play was revived by the Admiral's Men between 1597 and 1601, with Alleyn playing the part of Muly Mahamet. (BL Add. MS 10449, fol.3.)

¹¹² Victor von Klarwill (ed.), *The Fugger News-Letters*, 2 vols (London: Bodley Head, 1924), I, p.27.

¹¹³ Charles Edelman (ed.), *The Stukeley Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p.16.

While *The Battle of Alcazar* initially suggests a clear polarity between Abdelmelec as the play's hero and Muly Mahamet as a villainous usurper, this interpretation is problematized throughout the play, drawing attention to the complexities of the political situation it dramatizes. Abdelmelec is not as central in the play as Henslowe's title ('mvlllo mvlluco') implies, and his role is only the fourth largest part. The dramatic focus is shared by several characters (including Muly Mahamet, Stukeley, and Sebastian), and the inclusion of the Presenter as a chorus figure obscures the apparent dichotomy between the opposing forces.¹¹⁴ As the extant playhouse plot indicates, the Presenter appears as a Portuguese, which is indicative of his prevailing loyalties.¹¹⁵ While he emphatically condemns Muly Mahamet as a 'barbarous Moore' (despite some sympathetic domestic scenes with his wife, Calipolis), the Presenter praises the efforts of Muly Mahamet's allies, notably Sebastian, the 'braue king of Portugall', and his supporters, including Stukeley, for their military valour and moving 'forward in all armes and chiuallrie' (B3r). Creating a parallel with other characters in the play (including Stukeley), the loyalties of the Presenter are fluid and inconsistent. He is unreliable as a historical guide, suggesting a parallel with the Chorus in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, which may have been influenced by *The Battle of Alcazar*.

The Presenter's partial elucidation of the battle draws attention to the construction of historical narratives and the divided allegiances representative of this political conflict, which are further implied by the play's formal structure and its assigning of an elaborate and prominently-placed dying soliloquy to Stukeley. In his final monologue, Stukeley enumerates his personal exploits, which include alliances with Philip of Spain and plots against Protestant England, while the elevated style of the speech and the Presenter's earlier appraisal of Stukeley serve to memorialize his military actions, drawing attention to the play's ambiguous representations of its historical characters and political situation (F3v-F4r). A tension exists between the celebration of military exploits, expressed through the elevated rhetoric of Stukeley's

¹¹⁴ Susan Viguers, 'Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*', *Explicator*, 43:2 (1985), 9-12.

¹¹⁵ BL Add. MS 10449, fol.3.

soliloquy, and the unsettling alliances and endeavours (including negotiations with the Irish and Philip of Spain) to which Stukeley refers, and which suggest the appropriation of chivalric language for self-expedient aims.

1 Henry VI similarly complicates the representation of military valour by drawing attention to the dominance of fluid political allegiances and partial historical narratives that resist a dichotomized interpretation. The play, which appears in Henslowe's records as 'harey the vj', was the most frequently performed and highest grossing of all the plays during the residency of Strange's Men at the Rose, although it was not printed until its inclusion in the First Folio in 1623.¹¹⁶ As with *The Battle of Alcazar*, the play is highly topical, although not through the dramatization of a recent historical event as in Peele's play or *The Massacre at Paris*, also performed by Strange's Men. Instead, *1 Henry VI* dramatizes fifteenth-century history, engaging with the ongoing tensions between the French and English monarchies, which had reached a new level of urgency following the assassination of Henri III in 1589. Indeed, a series of failing French expeditions, notably the unsuccessful siege of Rouen in 1591, led by Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, in support of Henri of Navarre's accession, may account for the prolonged French conflicts dramatized in *1 Henry VI*. While one of the play's contemporary witnesses in 1592, Thomas Nashe, interpreted it in ebullient and patriotic terms, fixating on the presentation of 'braue Talbot (the terror of the French)' and rejoicing that 'hee should triumphe againe on the Stage, and haue his bones newe embalmed with the teares of ten thousand spectators at least', Nashe's description forms part of his defence of the theatre, and in this way, adopts a particular agenda that minimizes the tensions within the play.¹¹⁷ As Michael Taylor observes, 'the patriotic emotions to which this play shamelessly appeals resonate at an especially fragile time politically speaking', and complicate a purely celebratory

¹¹⁶ Most commentators accept that 'harey the vj' refers to *1 Henry VI*, as discussed by Michael Taylor in Shakespeare, *Henry VI Part I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.3. Foakes (ed.), pp.16-20; Manley and MacLean, p.339.

¹¹⁷ Nashe, *Pierce Pennilesse*, F3r.

and nationalistic interpretation.¹¹⁸ Walsh draws attention to the play's 'crumbling structures of authority and stability', presented broadly through the play's engagement with the reign of Henry VI, one of England's notoriously weak kings, and the beginnings of the Wars of the Roses, and, at a more local level, through the language of loss that pervades the play.¹¹⁹ In contrast to the firmer sense of resolution suggested by printed plays from the Queen's Men, *I Henry VI* leaves successional threats unresolved, challenging the representation of the past for memorializing and mythologizing aims.

Through a regular pattern of alternating scenes of political negotiation with military combat, *I Henry VI* shows how the fractious politics and internecine power struggles that dominate the English and French conflicts destabilize ideals of heroic military action, which are represented most significantly in the play by Talbot, the part probably performed by Alleyn during the early 1590s.¹²⁰ Talbot's position as a valiant military hero is celebrated but also shown as old-fashioned and ineffectual in the midst of the Machiavellian determinism that dominates the play. Scenes involving the pursuit of upward mobility and the political squabbles of the English aristocracy (including Winchester, Gloucester, Suffolk, Somerset, and York) and the French court are juxtaposed with Talbot's upholding of chivalric ideals, suggesting such values are out of place in this political climate. The final words of the play are given to Suffolk who, in effect, announces the dominance of self-seeking political promotion, perhaps drawing attention to the competing aristocratic pursuit of advancement at Elizabeth's court:

Thus Suffolke hath preuail'd, and thus he goes
As did the youthfull Paris once to Greece
[...]
Margaret shall now be Queene, and rule the King:
But I will rule both her, the King, and Realme.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Taylor in *Henry VI Part I*, p.23.

¹¹⁹ Walsh, "'Unkind Division'": The Double Absence of Performing History in *I Henry VI*, *SQ*, 55:2 (2004), 119-47 (p.126).

¹²⁰ See S.P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn, the New Model Actor, and the Rise of the Celebrity in the 1590s', *MRDE*, 18 (2005), 47-58.

¹²¹ *The first Part of Henry the Sixt in Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* (STC 22273, 1623), m2r. Further references are given after quotations.

An awareness of Edward Alleyn's possible performances as Talbot and Abdelmelec, often on consecutive days at the Rose theatre, highlights further parallels and interpretative continuities between *1 Henry VI* and *The Battle of Alcazar*. Both figures occupy major, but also slightly peripheral, positions due to the divided focus of the plays, with several characters competing for both political power and theatrical time, including Muly Mahamet, Abdelmelec, Sebastian, and Stukeley in *The Battle of Alcazar* and Talbot, Joan, York, Gloucester, Henry VI, and Suffolk in *Henry VI*. The position of the chivalric heroes is minimized by the scheming of other characters acting with a greater degree of political self-expediency, as in the fluid loyalties of Stukeley and the intrigues of Somerset and York. Significantly, both Abdelmelec and Talbot, representative of decaying military ideals, are specified in the printed texts as dying on stage and have similar final speeches, in which both characters turn their thoughts to spiritual release after the tragic realities of military conflict:

Abdel: Labour my Lords to renue our force,
Of fainting Moores, and fight it to the last
[...]
My sight doth faile, my soule, my feeble soule
Shall be releaste from prison on this earth:
Farwell vaine world for I haue playd my parte. [F1v]

Talbot: Thou antique Death, which laugh'st vs here to scorn,
[...]
Two Talbots winged through the lither Skie,
In thy despight shall scape Mortalitie.
[...]
My spirit can no longer beare these harmes.
Souldiers, adieu. I haue what I would haue. [15r-v]

As Palfrey and Stern discuss, 'typecasting was a primary feature of the early modern theatre, in that actors were cast along the lines of personality "type"', which influenced audiences' understanding and interpretation of a play.¹²² Alleyn's performance of these similar, 'majestic' parts would have heightened the parallels between the characters, dissolving distinctions between the English and 'foreign' historical figures they represent and drawing attention to their decaying positions within a politics of fluid allegiances. While the casting of Alleyn in these roles cannot be conclusively determined and is based on Henslowe's

¹²² Palfrey and Stern, *Shakespeare in Parts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.43-45.

assignment of titles and references to the parts typically taken by Alleyn, the appearance in these plays of parallel characters with similar narrative trajectories would still have encouraged associations between the histories, even if different actors were used. For early modern audiences, the plays' performance proximity would reveal the interconnections between these historical engagements and the ways in which both 'native' and 'foreign' history plays resonate with contemporary international affairs, demonstrating that classificatory efforts on the basis of such tenuous categories cannot be sustained when considering repertory practices.

Conclusions

This chapter has considered the position and scope of historical dramatizations during the early 1590s. It has examined evidence for local interpretations of the history play, particularly in relation to the pronounced publication peak of 1594 and company repertory patterns, and has highlighted the connections between plays engaging with a range of different pasts. The significance and utility of historical dramatizations can be seen in the repertory of companies, such as Lord Strange's Men, and by publication patterns, which show that the nascent market for professional playbooks was largely dominated by plays engaging with historical subjects, especially those featuring military battles, conflicts, and issues of monarchical government. As Peter Lake and Steven Pincus discuss, the 1590s was a period of 'perceived crisis or emergency' when 'members of the regime, its supporters, loyal opposition and overt critics and opponents' resorted to 'religio-political controversy and public pitch making', and the history play in its two arenas of performance and publication facilitates a range of engagements and local readings that often suggest a close connection to contemporary political issues.¹²³

¹²³ *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p.6.

In examining these readings, this chapter has drawn attention to the importance of Thomas Creede, William Barley, and the Queen's Men in shaping the history play in print during the early 1590s. These agents of production have played a significant role in play survival and publication, and have influenced our understanding of wider performance repertoires. An analysis of publication patterns and Stationers' Register entries suggests that Creede occupied the position of central agency in the plays' publication and created an identity for the Queen's Men in print. He positioned the plays through their paratexts, promoting topical and politically conservative readings that imply a connection with the company's royal patronage.

This chapter has also negotiated a range of performance and publication practices that will be featured throughout this study. The interpretative potential of playbook paratexts constitutes one of the most significant points of access in understanding local readings. This chapter has also stressed the influence of the physical geography of the London book trade in encouraging the dissemination of plays in print, and the importance of non-professional plays and non-dramatic materials in shaping the presentation of commercial playbooks. It has drawn attention to the different agendas of performance and publication, showing that these two forms of engagement are not commensurate with each other. During the early 1590s, dramatizations of the past involved a range of historical subjects that, through the evidence of publication and repertory patterns, challenge narrow critical views of the genre's parameters and draw attention to the plurality of interpretations enabled by the plays' re-presentation in different contexts and forms.

2

**Privileging Shakespeare and the monarchical history play in print:
The patronage network of Andrew Wise, George Carey, and the
Chamberlain's Men during the late 1590s**

Between 1597 and 1600, Shakespeare's history plays (as they were later catalogued in the First Folio) occupied a significant proportion of the market for professional playbooks, both in terms of the number of different plays achieving printed editions and the number of separate editions of these plays, which suggests the texts and their concentration on English monarchical history were popular with early readers.¹ This period witnessed multiple editions of *Richard II* (Q1 1597, Q2 1598, Q3 1598), *Richard III* (Q1 1597, Q2 1598, Q3 1602), *1 Henry IV* (Q0 1598, Q1 1598, Q2 1599), *2 Henry IV* (Q1 1600), and *Henry V* (Q1 1600, Q2 1602), together with reprints of the (collaborative) *First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster* (Q2 1600), *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (Q2 1600), and *Edward III* (Q2 1599). In 1598, Shakespeare's name was also presented on the title page of a playbook for the first time, and by 1600, he had emerged as the most published and attributed commercial dramatist, rapidly acquiring an identity and reputation in print as a playwright for the stage, which had significant consequences for the marketing of other playbooks.²

As opposed to Shakespeare's histories establishing and largely constituting the entire genre of the history play (as has been suggested by critical accounts), it is specifically during the late 1590s that the prominence of these plays can be most readily detected, and, as the preceding summary has intimated, this pattern is more precisely a print development that is linked to

¹ For example, between 1597 and 1600, thirteen editions of English monarchical history plays authored or partly authored by Shakespeare were published, out of a total of fifty-five playbook editions from the commercial theatres. Statistics calculated using *DEEP*.

² Lukas Erne, 'The Popularity of Shakespeare in Print', *SS* 62 (2009), 12-29; (pp. 26-27).

other factors, such as playbook attribution strategies. While critics such as Lukas Erne have identified the central position of Shakespeare's English histories as printed texts at the end of the sixteenth century, this recognition has not been applied to the evaluation of repertory patterns.³ Evidence from extant performance records suggests this period also witnessed a profusion of history plays on the professional stages; however, the characteristics of these corresponding peaks in performance and publication are notably different. Performance records point to much greater variety in subject matter and approach in contrast to the narrow print emphasis on English monarchical history, indicating that, while an interest in historical dramatizations may overlap between performance and print, the agendas, agents, and influences controlling dissemination within these two spheres differed considerably. Shakespeare's pre-eminence as a writer of history plays is closely bound to the book trade. As this chapter will demonstrate, an over-emphasis on English histories and teleological trajectories of historiographical development can unprofitably restrict critical perceptions of the genre and the ways in which history was defined in the period and represented on the stage, neglecting the full spectrum of historical engagement and how dramatic and non-dramatic texts explore, often in interconnected ways, ideas of the past.

A variety of factors can be seen as contributing towards this peak in history play performance and publication between 1597 and 1600, a period punctuated by considerable political and social tensions. Elizabeth's refusal to appoint a successor, a series of poor harvests, the continual threat of invasion from Spain, and the ongoing state of military preparation and deployment in Ireland and the Low Countries prompted a range of dramatic and non-dramatic responses. As Knutson observes, the conditions of the war-wearied Elizabethan state created an appetite for the dramatization of current issues in company repertories, exemplified in plays such as *A Larum for London, or The Siege of Antwerp* (c.1599, published in 1602), which 'tapped into the fear among Londoners of a Spanish invasion', and *The Shoemaker's Holiday*

³ Erne, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade*, pp.25-55.

(1599, published in 1600), with its representations of military preparation, conscription, and injured soldiers.⁴ The summer of 1599 brought supposed intelligence of an imminent invasion from Spain, which Francis Bacon named the ‘Invisible Armada’, and a range of publications focused on issues of military engagement, including Thomas Churchyard’s *Fortunate Farewell to the Most Forward and Noble Earl of Essex* (1599), which was printed upon Essex’s departure for Ireland and possibly informed Shakespeare’s *Henry V*.⁵

Further contributing to the publication of history plays was the literary context of the late 1590s and the interdependence of subject matter and approaches in dramatic and non-dramatic texts. Correspondences in commercial strategies and historical material between non-dramatic works, such as Samuel Daniel’s *Civil Wars* (1595), and professional plays, including Shakespeare’s *Richard II* (1597), impelled the propagation of the history play in print. Richard Jones reprinted Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* (Part 1 and 2) in its third edition in 1597, the same year as the publication of Jean Du Bec’s *History of the Great Emperor Tamerlan* (printed by Richard Field for William Ponsonby), which suggests that Jones was attempting to capitalize on readerly interest in the same historical figure. Non-dramatic texts also provided new source material for professional plays: *The History of George Castriot, surnamed Scanderbeg* (1596), for example, possibly informed the content of the lost play, ‘The true historye of George Scanderbauge’, performed in 1601 by Oxford’s Men and entered in the Stationers’ Register on 3 July 1601.⁶

The competing repertories of theatrical companies also exerted considerable influence on the composition and acquisition of different types of historical drama. Parallels in subject matter, sources, and contemporary applications between plays from different companies suggest that dramatists regularly responded to the offerings of their competitors, as in the case of

⁴ ‘Filling Fare: The Appetite for Current Issues and Traditional Forms in the Repertory of the Chamberlain’s Men’, *MRDE*, 15 (2003), 57-76 (p.64).

⁵ See James Shapiro, *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Faber, 2005), p.208.

⁶ Arber, III, p.187.

Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays, performed by the Chamberlain's Men, and the reactive *Sir John Oldcastle* from the Admiral's Men. Similar patterns of response through verbal echoes and allusions can be detected in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, which were both first performed in 1599. Evidence from the accounts in Henslowe's *Diary* indicate that history plays were popular with theatregoers which, for the commercially-dependent theatrical companies, would have encouraged the commissioning of similar material, as can be seen in history play sequels, including Drayton and Dekker's 'The Civil Wars of France' (Part 1, 2 and 3 in 1598-99), and Dekker's 'The First Introduction to the Civil Wars of France' (in 1599).⁷

However, as this chapter will argue, one of the most significant – and overlooked – factors in contributing to the position of the history play during the late 1590s (and in subsequent criticism) is the involvement of stationer Andrew Wise in the majority of the printed editions. As a publisher and bookseller, Wise was responsible for producing and distributing the editions of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *1 Henry IV*, and *2 Henry IV*. He invested in these plays, entered them in the Stationers' Register, and hired printers, including Peter Short, Valentine Simmes, and Thomas Creede, to manufacture the physical playbooks. Wise's venture proved hugely successful: *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *1 Henry IV* were rapidly reprinted in new editions and became the most popular of Shakespeare's plays in print (on the basis of edition numbers). This chapter will argue that Wise's involvement in the publication of Shakespeare's history plays is much more significant and extensive than that of a commercially-minded stationer who fortuitously published a group of plays that proved successful with readers. Instead, evidence suggests that Wise was involved in a patronage relationship with George Carey, second Baron Hunsdon (and Lord Chamberlain between 1597 and 1603), which motivated the selection and presentation of Shakespeare's histories in print.

⁷ Foakes (ed.), pp.98-103.

As considered in Chapter 1, evidence from playbook paratexts and the operating practices of the Stationers' Company demonstrate the central role of publishers, possibly in conjunction with patrons and theatrical companies, in selecting and re-presenting plays for a readerly audience, often relegating the position of the author, as suggested by Day's preface to *Gorboduc* (c.1570), or Jones's preface to *Tamburlaine* (1590). This chapter will propose a patronage network involving Andrew Wise, George Carey, and the Chamberlain's Men, and will draw attention to the influence of this network on the printed representatives of the history play during the late 1590s, and its role in developing Shakespeare's position as a professional dramatist in print. Instead of focusing on supposedly abrupt changes in historiographical approaches and assuming a direct correlation between print and stage success, this chapter will concentrate on the agency of specific stationers operating within a patronage network *and* within a commercially-driven, interdependent book trade. In pursuing this approach, this chapter will address, firstly, the nature of patronage networks involving aristocrats and stationers, drawing on David Bergeron's *Textual Patronage in English Drama* (2006), but suggesting the need to look beyond paratextual dedications in assessing patronage. The chapter will then examine the evidence for a patronage relationship between Andrew Wise and George Carey, considering how this connection, in conjunction with the influences of the commercial book trade and London's literary landscape, has controlled the selection and presentation of Shakespeare's histories in print. Finally, evidence for wider repertory patterns and lost plays will be examined to highlight the different audiences and agendas of print and performance, as well as the range of alternative histories that were dramatized on stage at the end of the sixteenth century.

Connecting patron and publisher: The textual patronage of Andrew Wise by George Carey

In Chapter 1, a publication connection between Thomas Creede and the Queen's Men was proposed, which centralized Creede's agency in positioning the plays and promoting local readings through the paratexts. While the plays' presentation in print suggests an alignment

with the interests of the company's royal patron, there is no indication that Elizabeth was directly involved in their publication, and Walsingham and Leicester, the other influential individuals connected to the company's formation, were both dead by the time the plays were published. Instead, Creede and Barley were perhaps capitalizing on a nominal patronage link that accorded with patterns in their wider publication outputs. In the case of Andrew Wise and George Carey, however, evidence points to a more extensive and sustained publication network. Such connections between stationers and aristocratic patrons are infrequently proposed in critical studies, probably owing to the more tenuous, disparate, and inconclusive records that surround these potential relationships. Unlike the links between patrons and authors, which are more often discussed (especially as they often feature in paratextual materials, including dedications), the possible relationships between stationers and aristocratic patrons have been afforded minimal attention.

Indeed, approaches to textual patronage have often proceeded cautiously. David Bergeron identifies the dedicatory epistles and addresses to readers as constituting the primary evidence for patronage, and confines his discussion of patronage relationships to the conclusions that can be extracted from these paratexts.⁸ However, many commercial plays from the period do not contain dedicatory epistles and addresses, which does not necessarily point to an absence of textual patronage but suggests a wider evidential basis is necessary for assessing patronage. This requirement is especially apparent when considering the involvement of stationers in patronage networks, as, even when other evidence indicates a reciprocal connection, dedicatory epistles from stationers to patrons appear only occasionally. In any case, dedications do not necessarily amount to concrete evidence for patronage (in the form of financial or professional assistance), as they were often written in an attempt to secure such support, rather than bearing witness to an established connection.⁹

⁸ *Textual Patronage in English Drama, 1570-1640* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p.1.

⁹ Consider, for example, the number of dedications addressed to Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, during the 1590s, which at times exceeded those offered to Elizabeth I. The majority of these are not indicative of a reciprocal relationship between dedicatee and author or stationer, and on occasion, even

Instead, references in letters and accounts, together with a consideration of a stationer's published output, comprise the main evidence for understanding the relationship between a stationer and patron. In the 1580s, for example, printer John Charlewood described himself as the servant 'to the right honourable [Philip Howard] Earl of Arundel', and in a Martin Marprelate tract from 1587, he is identified as 'the earl of Arundel's man'.¹⁰ Printer and bookseller John Wolfe claimed he was George Goring's servant and sought his protection during the 1580s. Goring, an Elizabethan courtier and diplomat, provided Wolfe with a letter of support on 18 October 1582 following his difficulties with the Stationers' Company and prosecution for challenging printing privileges.¹¹ The Stationers' Register records Thomas Norton's response to Goring on 23 October 1582, in which he requests that 'you must oppose your self as aduersarie Either to Wolf your man, or to your mistresse the Quene and to all her maiesties seruantes'.¹²

Other stationers with connections to aristocratic patrons include Christopher Barker, who, in addition to acting as the Queen's printer, was patronized by Walsingham, marking his texts with a tiger's head from Walsingham's crest, and William Ponsonby, who was supported by Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, and published 'books that were staunchly Protestant', including the homilies of the Zurich preacher Rudolph Walther.¹³ Ponsonby was also aligned with the Sidney circle and published the majority of Spenser's works, together with those of the Sidney family, indicating his patronage connections through the selection of specific texts for publication. Michael Brennan suggests that 'it seems to have been essential for a bookseller of Ponsonby's importance to be associated through his books with some of the various political, religious and literary groups of the day' and 'to produce books which were

proved problematic for Essex, as with John Hayward's *First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV* (1599).

¹⁰ H.R. Tedder, 'Charlewood, John (d.1593)', rev. Robert Faber, *ODNB*, para.3.

¹¹ Gadd, I., 'Wolfe, John (b. in or before 1548?, d. 1601)', *ODNB*, para. 5.

¹² Arber, II, pp.773-74.

¹³ Michael Brennan, 'William Ponsonby: Elizabethan Stationer', *Analytical & Enumerative Bibliography*, 7:3 (1983), 91-110 (p.92).

compatible with the views of the Court circle headed by Leicester and Sidney'.¹⁴ Ponsonby's strategies indicate the overlap between patronage and commercial factors in the presentation of printed texts, a connection that will be explored throughout this chapter.

These associations between patrons and stationers were not often announced by means of dedications and epistles, or through bequests in wills. Ponsonby's will (proved 23 January 1604) does not contain any references to his former patrons and, similarly, aristocratic wills usually make only a few specific bequests to close servants.¹⁵ George Carey's will (proved 27 September 1603) provides pensions to 'William Cotton gentleman', 'George Bland my Steward' and 'my Servaunts John Snowe and John Richardes', but no further references are made to other associates or servants, such as stationers or writers patronized by Carey.¹⁶ Most evidence survives through details in written letters (often relating to a dispute, or a stationer's attempts at seeking protection from an aristocratic patron), as well as through an assessment of a stationer's published output. The dedications of printer Richard Field to Burghley, and Richard Jones's numerous prefatory epistles, including some to aristocratic individuals such as Walsingham, are unrepresentative of most extant evidence.¹⁷ Indications of patronage must be sought in alternative locations, and involve an evaluation of a patron's possible reasons for supporting a selection of publications, an approach that has been resisted by critics, such as Bergeron and Richard Dutton (especially in relation to theatrical patronage), because of the degree of speculation involved.¹⁸ The limitations of extant texts and archives, however, do not necessarily indicate *historical* absences, and evaluating publication patterns and aristocratic motivations are essential strategies in addressing textual and theatrical patronage during the early modern period.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.102-03.

¹⁵ Henry Plomer, *Abstracts from the Wills of English Printers and Stationers, From 1492 to 1630* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1903), p.39.

¹⁶ NA: PROB 11/102/245 (Will of Sir George Carey, Baron of Hunsdon).

¹⁷ See Field's dedication to Burghley in George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (STC 20519, 1589), and Jones's dedication to Walsingham in *Cyuiile and uncyuile life* (STC 15589.5, 1579).

¹⁸ Bergeron, pp.1-22; 23-48.

Returning to Andrew Wise and the publication of Shakespeare's history plays, an assessment of Wise's overall published output points towards his involvement in a patronage network involving George and Elizabeth Carey. As identified and discussed by Sonia Massai, the majority of Wise's publications are from writers who were 'under the direct patronage and protection of George Carey, Lord Chamberlain between 1597 and 1603'.¹⁹ After establishing his bookshop at the Sign of the Angel in St Paul's Churchyard in c.1593, Wise specialized exclusively (until 1600) in texts by Thomas Nashe, Thomas Playfere, and Shakespeare, all of whom were patronized by the Careys. Nashe dedicated *Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem* (1593) to Elizabeth Carey (George's wife), claiming his 'choisest studies' were directed 'to the eternizing of the heroycall familie of the Careys'.²⁰ In response, George Carey provided Nashe with financial support and assistance after his imprisonment, as indicated in a letter from George to his wife, dated 13 November 1593:

Nashe hath dedicated a booke unto you, with promis of a better. Will Cotton will disburs v li [£5] or xx nobles [£6 13s. 4d.] in yowr rewarde to him, and he shall not finde my purs shutt to relieve him out of prison, there presently in great misserly, malicied for writing against the Londoners.²¹

Nashe continued to dedicate texts to the Carey family and, in *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (1596), Nashe alludes to George Carey's hospitality following his release from prison: Carey welcomed Nashe as a guest at Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight, during the Christmas of 1593 'and a great while after'.²² Moreover, Nashe's only surviving autograph correspondence is a letter in 1596 to the Careys' servant, William Cotton (who is also referred to in the letter cited above), suggesting that a connection between the Carey family and Nashe continued during the 1590s.²³

¹⁹ Sonia Massai, 'Shakespeare, text and paratext,' *SS* 62 (2009), 1-11 (p.6). See also Massai, *Editor*, pp.91-105.

²⁰ *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem* (STC 18366, 1593), *2v.

²¹ Quoted in Charles Nicholl, 'Nashe, Thomas (*bap.* 1567, *d.* c.1601)', *ODNB*, para.24.

²² Thomas Nashe, *Have with you to Saffron-walden* (STC 18369, 1596), P1v.

²³ BL Cotton MS Julius Caesar 3, fol.280.

Similarly, Thomas Playfere exclusively dedicates his sermons printed between 1596 and 1603 to either George or Elizabeth Carey, and in *The Pathway to Perfection* (1596), credits his university education and support to George Carey, claiming that by his ‘munificence and bountie my studies haue been hitherto continued’.²⁴ Wise was the only publisher of Playfere’s sermons until 1603, although the connection between preacher and publisher was, at least at the beginning, notably hostile.²⁵ In 1595, Wise published the sermon that Playfere preached at St Mary’s Hospital in Easter week 1595 as *A most excellent and heavenly sermon*, which was quickly reprinted in another edition. These publications were not overseen by Playfere and he objected, claiming they were printed from a reported text that had been written down by an unknown individual listening to the sermon.²⁶ This practice was relatively common and was a means of preserving spoken sermons: as Stern argues, ‘preachers did not write entire texts before preaching, but spoke from notes of their own; the published “bad” texts were the most complete records of what had been preached’.²⁷ However, some preachers, including Playfere, disapproved of this process of transmission and the ‘mangled’ texts that resulted.²⁸

In 1596, Wise published a revised edition of the Easter week sermon, which was authorized by Playfere and titled *The Mean in Mourning*. In a dedicatory address to the ‘Lady Elizabeth Carey, wife to the thise-noble, Sir George Carey, Knight Marshall’, Playfere describes how ‘this sermon hath been twice printed already without my procurement’ and that he has ‘played the surgeon’ to redress the faults in the text.²⁹ A contrastive analysis of Wise’s earlier editions and Playfere’s authorized edition shows that Playfere’s most extensive revisions relate to the style, presentation, and annotation of the text. Much of the main sermon remains the same; Playfere has instead added elaborate printed marginalia in English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew,

²⁴ *The pathway to perfection* (STC 20020, 1596), A3r.

²⁵ In 1603, Wise disappeared from historical records, and Playfere started another exclusive publication association, this time with John Legate, printer to the University of Cambridge.

²⁶ See Playfere, *The Meane in Mourning* (STC 20015, 1596), A2v.

²⁷ Tiffany Stern, ‘Sermons, Plays, and Note-Takers: *Hamlet* Q1 as a “Noted” Text’, *Shakespeare Survey* 66 (2013), 1-23 (7).

²⁸ Playfere, *Mourning*, A2r.

²⁹ Playfere, *Mourning*, A2r, A3r.

and has included references and digressions that were not part of the spoken text, as he acknowledges in his dedication to Elizabeth Carey.³⁰ Playfere's sermons offer an interesting case study of an author evaluating the merits and shortcomings of print circulation in a book trade in which stationers held the rights to procure and register texts for publication. Although Wise was fined by the Stationers' Company for publishing the text without registration, he held the rights to Playfere's sermon, and Playfere was obliged to work with Wise to produce the authorized version.³¹ The fact that Wise also published Playfere's *Pathway to Perfection* in 1596 (which was issued together with *The Mean in Mourning*) suggests some degree of cooperation between the preacher and publisher, as Playfere did not need to use Wise as a publisher for another sermon.³² In his prefatory materials to *The Pathway to Perfection*, Playfere criticizes the maligned and unauthorized editions published earlier by Wise and denies any interest in print circulation; however, these paratexts also show an author working through and reappraising his own reservations about print. Playfere advertises his sermon's literary importance by claiming that the Bishop of London 'both by his letter, and by word of mouth' requested a copy of the sermon 'for the presse'.³³ As with *The Mean in Mourning*, Playfere provides a heavily annotated text, which contains marginalia and references that were never spoken and that reshape the sermon as a prestigious and exclusive text to be read. Indeed, as Adam Hooks observes, 'Playfere's case is instructive, since it so clearly demonstrates how the trade connections and cultural awareness of a stationer could alter an author's career, proving his viability as a published author, hence showing him the possibilities afforded by print'.³⁴ The example of Playfere's sermons shows Wise to be an

³⁰ In his dedication, Playfere claims that although the reader 'haue all heere which he heard then, yet hee heard not all then, which he hath heere' (A3v). See, for example, F8r–G1r for Playfere's multilingual marginal annotations.

³¹ Arber, II, p.831: The Stationers' Register shows that Wise was fined forty shillings on 28 June 1595 'for master Playfordes sermon'. This fine was not owing to Playfere's objections, but because Wise had not registered the text with the Company.

³² In his prefatory address to *The Pathway to Perfection*, Playfere encourages readers who already owned Wise's unauthorized edition of the Easter week sermon to purchase the new version (*The Mean in Mourning*), as they will also receive *The Pathway to Perfection*, which is offered 'for nothing' as marketing strategy (A3r).

³³ Playfere, *Pathway to Perfection*, A2r.

³⁴ Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare: Biography, Bibliography, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p.70.

active agent in procuring texts for publication, even against their authors' will, and in contributing to the re-presentation of sermons and plays (as will be discussed later) as texts for readers. Wise acquired Playfere's sermons at the beginning of his career (at a similar time to his publication of Nashe's *Christ's Tears*). He perhaps knew of these writers and their connections to George Carey from serving his own apprenticeship in Cambridge during the 1580s, when both Playfere and Nashe were students at St John's College.³⁵ Wise's connection with Shakespeare – another of Carey's patronized writers – would be more lasting and, on the evidence of the published texts, more cooperative than his earlier ventures.

Shakespeare's direct connection with George Carey started in 1596, following the death of George's father, Henry Carey, first Baron Hunsdon and Lord Chamberlain, on 23 July 1596. Henry Carey had been the initial patron of the Chamberlain's Men, a role which was then taken up by George, until his death in 1603. Between 1596 and 1603, the company regularly performed at George Carey's own residences and at court, providing all of the court entertainment during George's first Christmas season as patron in 1596-97, an unprecedented development in the company's history which earned them a substantial financial reward of sixty pounds as their payment for the performances.³⁶

While other stationers published editions of plays by Shakespeare at the end of the sixteenth century, Wise was the most significantly invested, publishing ten of the twenty Shakespearian editions printed between 1597 and 1600.³⁷ This concentration, together with the quality of

³⁵ Hooks, *Selling*, pp.90-91.

³⁶ Thomas Pope and John Heminges from the company were paid sixty pounds for court performances on 26 and 27 December 1596, 1 and 6 January 1597, and 6 and 8 February 1597. Chambers *ES*, IV, p.165.

³⁷ Wise's ten playbooks are three editions of *Richard II*, two editions of *Richard III*, three editions of *I Henry IV*, one edition of *2 Henry IV*, and one edition of *Much Ado About Nothing*. The ten editions published by other stationers include two editions of *Romeo and Juliet* (1597 and 1599 by Danter and Burby, respectively), *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598 by Burby), *Edward III* (1599 by Burby), *Titus Andronicus* (1600 by White), *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (both 1600 by Millington), *Henry V* (1600 by Millington and Busby), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600 by Fisher), and *The Merchant of Venice* (1600 by Hayes). Of this latter group, four were reprints of plays first published in 1594-96 and performed before the formation of the Chamberlain's Men (namely, *Titus Andronicus*, *The First Part of the Contention*, and *The True Tragedy of Richard*

Wise's playbooks (discussed below), suggests that he may have had a direct connection with the company that was possibly shaped by his emerging publishing specialism in texts by Carey's patronized writers. The staying entry recorded in the Stationers' Register on 4 August 1600 could be seen as complicating this claim; the entry indicates that the printing of 'As yow like yt', 'Henry the ffift', 'Euery man in his humor', and 'The commedie of mucche A doo about nothings', all plays from the Chamberlain's Men, are 'to be staied' (that is, stopped).³⁸ This attempt at publication control could be an effort to prevent stationers from printing plays from the Chamberlain's Men, and, at this time, Wise was probably interested in one of these plays – *Much Ado About Nothing* – which he would later publish with William Aspley in 1600. However, the aims of this staying entry and the individuals to whom it was directed remain ambiguous. It is unclear whether the entry was intended to prevent the publication of these plays or to temporarily forestall them until certain conditions were met. The entry could, in fact, be indicative of a cooperative working relationship between the Stationers' Company and the Chamberlain's Men, rather than being an attempt to restrict publishing activities. Following this staying order, three of the plays were almost immediately entered in the Register: Thomas Pavier entered *Henry V* on 14 August; Cuthbert Burby and Walter Burre entered *Every Man In His Humour* also on 14 August; and Wise and Aspley entered *Much Ado* on 23 August. These plays were then printed between 1600 and 1601; only *As You Like It* remained in manuscript until it was entered in the Register on 8 November 1623 and printed in the First Folio. The speed at which three of the four plays were entered in the Register and published, and the lack of evidence for any negative repercussions, suggests that whatever preconditions were required by the staying order were quickly met. The order does reveal a growing interest in printed plays from the Chamberlain's Men, which was probably encouraged by the success of Wise's earlier editions of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *1 and 2 Henry IV*, and does not necessarily indicate an attempt at controlling Wise's enterprise. It

Duke of York, all published in their second editions in 1600, and *Edward III*, published in its second edition in 1599).

³⁸ Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, Liber C, flyleaf.

may, in fact, be an attempt to allocate the publication rights for plays from the Chamberlain's Men to specific stationers approved by the company.³⁹

Moreover, when comparing Wise's editions with those of other stationers who published Shakespeare's plays between 1594 and 1603, the relative quality of Wise's texts becomes apparent, which lends further support to the idea of a publication design informed by patronage connections underlining the plays' dissemination in print. While employing such descriptive terms as 'good' and 'bad' quarto is problematic, often leading to a dismissal of editions that reveal important information about the development of theatrical texts, the influence of alternative producers, and the transmission of plays from stage to page, Wise's playbook editions are among the least textually problematic, are routinely classified as 'good' quartos, and are regularly used as the copy texts for modern critical editions.

Wise's publication of *Richard III* (Q1 1597) provides the only possible exception. Some critics (such as David Lyall Patrick) have considered Q1 a poor edition, possibly deriving from memorial reconstruction.⁴⁰ However, a close examination of Q1 shows the majority of textual issues arise from incomplete, deficient or confusing stage directions, which can be explained by considering the printing of the text, shared by Valentine Simmes and Peter Short for Andrew Wise. The printed text is unusually cramped: as John Jowett observes, there are overlength pages, text is included on the catchword lines, and the practice of leaving space above and/or below a stage direction has been neglected, many stage directions being printed to the right of verse lines.⁴¹ Probably arising from a casting-off miscalculation, this spacing problem may have resulted in some stage directions being omitted or changed, especially considering the additions and alterations to the directions introduced in Wise's third edition

³⁹ Cf. Joseph Loewenstein, *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.42-44.

⁴⁰ *The Textual History of 'Richard III'*, Stanford University Publications VI:I (London: Humphrey Milford, 1936).

⁴¹ William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Richard III*, ed. by John Jowett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp.114-17.

of the text in 1602, which suggests reference to a fuller manuscript. As opposed to reflecting the state of the original manuscript acquired by Wise, the early quartos of *Richard III* indicate a text adapted by the printing house to accommodate spacing demands.

Conversely, other plays by Shakespeare published at this time, including *Romeo and Juliet* (in 1597, by John Danter), *Henry V* (in 1600, by Thomas Millington) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (in 1602, by Arthur Johnson), differ considerably from Wise's editions in terms of the quality of the texts they preserve. They pose problems in relation to staging, character discrepancies, apparent abridgement, formulaic dialogue, and stylistic inconsistencies, leading in several cases to stronger claims of memorial reconstruction, particularly with *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.⁴² This assessment suggests that, of all the London stationers involved in the publication of Shakespeare's plays in the 1590s, Wise acquired some of the most textually straightforward manuscripts, pointing to a professional relationship between the Chamberlain's Men and Wise in line with his position as the main publisher for writers patronized by George Carey.

In summary, the Careys, as literary and theatrical patrons, were most closely connected to Shakespeare (as a member of the Chamberlain's Men), Nashe, and Playfere, and, collectively, the works from these three patronized writers comprise the majority of Wise's publications. Although the Careys received printed dedications from other writers, including Thomas Churchyard in *A Tragical Discourse of the Hapless Man's Life* (1593, dedicated to Elizabeth) and *A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars* (1596, dedicated to George), John Dowland in *The First Book of Songs* (1597, dedicated to George), and Edmund Spenser in his dedications to Elizabeth in *The Faerie Queen* (1590, sixteenth sonnet) and *Muiopotmos* (1590), much less evidence exists in these cases for a direct patronage relationship. As Ernest Strathmann suggests, neither these dedications nor other external sources of evidence reveal an established

⁴² Laurie Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The 'bad' quartos and their contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.257-58, 285-86, 301-02.

connection between writer and patron, and the conventionality of the language employed does not convey the same specificity of the claims in the dedications of Nashe and Playfere.⁴³ It would seem that all writers directly supported by the Careys were also published by Andrew Wise, strengthening the posited connection between Wise and Carey. As suggested by Playfere's complaints over the 'unauthorized' publication of his sermons, Wise may have sought out an association with Carey's patronized writers, which developed into a cooperative working relationship with the publication of Shakespeare's plays from the Chamberlain's Men.

Indeed, the singularity of Wise's publishing concentration, particularly in relation to commercial plays, is striking. Even Thomas Creede's specialization in the plays of Queen Elizabeth's Men, as discussed in Chapter 1, does not involve such a consistent selection of authors patronized by a single aristocratic family. Similarly, Cuthbert Burby, who published a comparable range of dramatic and non-dramatic texts as Wise, including sermons, commercial plays, and news pamphlets, does not exclusively concentrate on works connected to a particular patron or plays performed by one theatrical company. At this nascent period in the development of a market for printed plays, it is much more common for stationers, with the exceptions of Creede and Wise, to avoid division along company lines and, instead, to publish a selection of plays from different theatrical companies. Burby produced editions of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1599, second edition) from the Chamberlain's Men, as well as *George a Greene* (1599) from Sussex's Men, and *Mother Bombie* (1594 and 1598) from Paul's Boys. Similarly, Thomas Fisher published *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600) from the Chamberlain's Men, together with plays from Paul's Boys, including Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (1602).

⁴³ 'Lady Carey and Spenser', *ELH*, 2:1 (1935), 33-57.

The publishing activities of playbill printers also highlight the significance of Wise's enterprise. The rights to publish playbills were held successively by four printer-publishers between 1587 and 1642: John Charlewood (until 1594), James Roberts (until c.1606 to 1615); William and Isaac Jaggard (until 1627); and Thomas and Richard Cotes (until 1642).⁴⁴ In addition to printing playbills for all the theatrical companies, these stationers were involved in the publication of a considerable number of plays from the professional stages: as Stern observes, 'so many plays, and in particular plays of Shakespeare, fell into the hands of these four printer/publishers'.⁴⁵ Wise's publications are therefore especially significant because he was largely unconnected to James Roberts (who was the playbill printer during Wise's career). In his publication of Shakespeare's plays from the Chamberlain's Men, Wise acted independently of the other stationers involved in the publication of playbills and plays. Seen in this context, his range of publications demands increased attention as the likely product of a patronage connection shaped by the interests and position of the Careys.

Interestingly, George Carey's role as a theatrical and literary patron has often been either overlooked or considered unfavourably, especially in relation to the Chamberlain's Men.⁴⁶ Reference is frequently made to the petition in November 1596 by residents of the Blackfriars to the Privy Council against the conversion of James Burbage's 'certaine roomes' into an indoor theatre for the use of Hunsdon's Men, as George Carey's signature appears prominently in the petition in opposition to the playhouse.⁴⁷ Nashe's letter to William Cotton in 1596 has also been cited as evidence of Carey's disinterested or potentially restrictive relationship with his new company:

In towne I stayd (being earnestly inuited elsewhere) vpon had I wist hopes & an after haruest I expected by writing for the stage & for the presse, when now the players as if they had writt another Christs tears, ar piteously persecuted by the L. Maior & the aldermen, & howeuer in there old Lords

⁴⁴ See Tiffany Stern, 'Playbills', pp.61-62.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.64.

⁴⁶ See Gurr, *Shakespeare Company*, pp.6-10.

⁴⁷ Chambers *ES*, IV, pp.319-20.

tyme they thought there state settled, it is now so vncertayne they cannot build vpon it.⁴⁸

Both of these accounts, however, have been afforded undue significance. Carey's involvement in the petition was probably related to the close proximity of his own residence to the proposed playhouse and, when considering other records of Carey's influence on the company's fortunes, this restricting action seems atypical. Nashe's comments do not address Carey directly or suggest that his patronage is responsible for the 'vncertayne' state of the company. Indeed, given that George Carey was Nashe's own patron and had supported Nashe during his imprisonment, and that this letter, which is Nashe's only extant autograph correspondence, is addressed 'To my worship-full good freinde M[aste]r William Cotton', gentleman servant of George Carey, it is unlikely that Nashe is offering any critical view on Carey's position as the company's new patron.⁴⁹ Instead, the letter is indicative of Nashe's close connection with the Carey family and their associates.

In fact, it is during George Carey's patronage that substantial evidence emerges for a theatrical 'duopoly' involving the Chamberlain's Men and the Admiral's Men. Although Gurr identifies 1594 as the year that marks the inauguration of a duopoly between these two companies, performance records do not necessarily support this claim.⁵⁰ Efforts to privilege the operations of these two companies emerge more clearly in 1598 through a Privy Council minute that affords a licence to Charles Howard, the lord admiral, and George Carey, and is recorded in a letter to the 'Master of the Revelles and Justices of Peace of Middlesex and Surrey' on 19 February 1598:

Licence hath bin graunted unto two companies of stage players retayned unto us, the Lord Admyral and Lord Chamberlain, to use and practise stage playes, whereby they might be the better enhabled and prepared to shew such plaies before her Majestie [...] Wee have therefore thought good to require you uppon receipt heereof to take order that the aforesaid third company may be suppressed and none suffered heereafter to plaie but those two formerlie named belonging to us.⁵¹

⁴⁸ BL Cotton MS Julius Caesar 3, fol.280r.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fol.280v.

⁵⁰ Cf. Syme, 'Meaning of Success'.

⁵¹ Chambers *ES*, IV, p.325.

Contrary to previous claims, these actions suggest greater munificence in Carey's patronage of the company and a desire to enhance its position, both at court and in the commercial environment of the playhouse. As discussed earlier, during the 1596-97 season at court (immediately following the Blackfriars petition), Hunsdon's Men provided all the entertainment, a profitable and unparalleled development in the company's history and one that was potentially influenced by Carey's position and court connections.

Another factor that indicates Carey's involvement with the Chamberlain's Men and his protection of their interests is an entry in the Stationers' Register on 22 July 1598. It is made out to James Roberts for 'a booke of the Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce', which is almost certainly Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. The entry is provisional, however, and stipulates that the play 'bee not prynted by the said James Robertes or anye other whatsoever without lycence first had from the Right honorable the lord Chamberlen'.⁵² This is an unusual entry, particularly because the Lord Chamberlain was not one of the regular press licensors. As Joseph Loewenstein discusses, it may be that Carey was 'interested in inhibiting publication of "his" company's plays', an argument that lends further support to the idea that Carey was taking an active interest in the operations of the Chamberlain's Men.⁵³ The involvement of Roberts, who had a close connection to the company through his role as playbill printer, could be cooperative or adversarial. He may have been assisting the company's efforts to forestall the publication of the play, or he may have been working independently, attempting to register a text for which the Stationers' Company recognized the need for a provisional entrance. The rights to *The Merchant of Venice* were later transferred on 28 October 1600 to Thomas Hayes, and Roberts printed the text, which suggests some degree of cooperation between stationers and the company, although the circumstances remain uncertain. What is clear, however, is that the provisional entry indicates, as Loewenstein argues, an attempt 'to transfer to the Chamberlain's Men

⁵² Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, Liber C, fol.39v.

⁵³ Loewenstein, p.39.

monopolistic protections proper to the Stationers' Company', a process which would become more prominent during the Jacobean and Caroline periods (discussed in Chapter 4 and 5).⁵⁴

Carey's involvement and intervention on behalf of his company does not divest Wise of significant business autonomy in the publication of plays from the Chamberlain's Men. As suggested by Playfere's hostile response to the publication of his sermon in 1595, Wise may have initiated an association with the Carey family by selecting and obtaining access to authors patronized by the Careys, which reached its peak with the publication of Shakespeare's plays at the end of the sixteenth century. Moreover, the slight changes in Wise's publishing practices between 1600 and 1603 (as he started to publish other writers) suggest a stationer alert to alternative market demands, rather than pursuing his heretofore-exclusive connection with a single textual patron. Aristocratic patronage may exert a degree of influence on repertory choices, subject matter, and dramatic approaches, but its control should not be overstated, as the theatre and book trade operate as commercial enterprises motivated by the demands and preoccupations of competitors, audiences, and readers. The next section will evaluate patronage and commercial considerations in tandem, showing how they are often interdependent and reciprocal. It will examine the selection of Shakespeare's history plays for publication during the late 1590s and identify local readings of the plays as they relate to the interests and agendas of the network involving Wise, Carey, and the Chamberlain's Men.

Wise editions: Promoting English monarchical history in print

While other plays by Shakespeare were printed between 1597 and 1600, including *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600), and *The Merchant of Venice* (1600), almost all of the editions published by Wise engage with historical subject matter, dramatizing events from the reigns of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century English monarchs. The single exception is Wise's joint publication of *Much Ado About Nothing* with

⁵⁴ Loewenstein, p.41.

William Aspley in 1600, which is perhaps indicative of Aspley's own specialisms, while also reflecting the change in Wise's practices that starts to emerge at this time.⁵⁵ Wise's concentration on English history plays in the preceding years is particularly significant, relating both to the interests of the Carey family and to non-dramatic publications that were appearing on the bookstalls at the same time as Wise's editions and often in close geographical proximity.

Contemporary records indicate that the Carey family were involved in significant political and military activities during Elizabeth's reign and had a close kinship with the queen. As the son of William Carey and Mary Boleyn, Henry Carey (1526-1596), first Baron Hunsdon and first patron of the Chamberlain's Men, was Elizabeth's first cousin. In *Fragmenta Regalia* (1641), Robert Naunton describes Henry Carey, who was the father of George Carey, as 'of the Queens neerest kindred', and emphasizes his predominantly military interests, observing that 'he loved sword and buckler men' and 'men of their hands, of which sort, he had many brave Gentlemen that followed him'.⁵⁶ Moreover, the majority of the texts dedicated to both Henry and his son, George, involve military or historical subject matter, suggesting the family was particularly associated with these interests by their contemporaries. Although there is no evidence for the direct patronage of these writers by the Careys (unlike the corresponding evidence for George Carey's support of Nashe, Playfere, and Shakespeare), it is likely that Humfrey Barwick's *A brief discourse concerning the force and effect of all manual weapons of fire* (c.1592, dedicated to Henry), Thomas Churchyard's *A pleasant discourse of court and wars* (1596, dedicated to George), Marin Barleti's *The history of George Castriot, surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albania* (1596, dedicated to George), and Giles Fletcher's *The policy of the Turkish empire* (1597, dedicated to George) were strategically associated with the Carey family through their dedications, possibly with the aim of securing future patronage in some

⁵⁵ Aspley would develop a specialism in comedies, publishing several plays from the boys' companies in the early seventeenth century, including Marston's *The Malcontent* (1604), and Chapman, Jonson, and Marston's *Eastward Ho* (1605).

⁵⁶ *Fragmenta Regalia* (Wing/N250, 1641), D3r.

form. Although other aristocrats, such as Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, received a greater number of dedications, George Carey's literary interests were singled out by his contemporaries, including George Chapman, who praised him as the 'skill-embracing heir of Hunsdon', having 'most profitably entertained learning in [himself]', suggesting that the Careys, especially George, were associated with both military and literary pursuits.⁵⁷

The political careers of the Careys also draw attention to their military interests, in particular on governing the area around the Scottish border, known as the Marches, maintaining working but authoritative relations with the Scots, and carefully prioritizing the issue of succession (and through their close connections with the Scottish monarchy, favouring James VI of Scotland's accession to the English throne). Henry Carey was appointed governor of Berwick on 25 August 1568, worked in the borders 'at a time of particular sensitivity', and played a prominent role in the suppression of the Northern Rebellion in 1569. As privy councillor, he was considered the 'Scottish expert' and 'a kind of minister for Scottish business'.⁵⁸ Similarly, George Carey served on important committees on the fate of Mary, Queen of Scots, the regulation of the Scottish borders, and the aftermath of the Northern Rebellion, and was knighted for his military service at Berwick on 11 May 1570. Another son, John Carey (*d.*1617), later third Baron Hunsdon, became Marshal of Berwick; Sir Edward Hoby (1560-1617), who married Henry Carey's daughter, Margaret, participated in missions to Scotland; and Robert Carey (1560-1639), later first earl of Monmouth and the youngest of Henry's sons, received numerous appointments in the north as Deputy Warden of the West March from 1593 to 1595, and Warden of the Middle March from 1597. In his memoirs, Robert describes the privileged position of the Careys in the estimation of James VI of Scotland, claiming that when James 'had a matter of great importance to acquaint his sister the Queen of England

⁵⁷ Strathmann, p.45.

⁵⁸ Wallace T. MacCaffrey, 'Carey, Henry, first Baron Hunsdon (1526-1596)', *ODNB*, para.5, 22.

withal [...] he would not trust the Queen's Ambassador with it, nor any other, unless it were my father, or some of his children'.⁵⁹

Within this context, Wise's publication of Shakespeare's history plays seems alert to the interests of the company's patron, especially considering some of the issues addressed by these plays, including the numerous rebellions that took place in the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, and Richard III, the political instabilities arising from powerful court factions, and the debates surrounding monarchical succession. Indeed, contemporary references suggest these plays were favourites of the Carey family, perhaps as a result of their potential application to current events and anxieties, such as the Elizabethan succession crisis and an ongoing threat of rebellion and civil unrest. None of Shakespeare's other plays is singled out by the Carey family, but it is likely that *Richard II* and *I Henry IV* feature in their correspondence, pointing to the family's enjoyment of this subject matter and its contemporary topicality.

For example, in a letter dated 7 December 1595, Hoby invited Sir Robert Cecil to 'visit poore Channonrowe [Hoby's London residence] where as late as yt shal please yow a gate for your supper shal be open: & King Richard present him self to your vewe'.⁶⁰ While the identification of 'King Richard' with Shakespeare's play is questionable (with alternative theories supposing, for example, a portrait of the king in Hoby's residence), the phrasing of Hoby's description suggests a performance.⁶¹ The likeliest candidate is Shakespeare's *Richard II* which, in 1595, was a new play for the Chamberlain's Men, and was linked, through theatrical patronage, with the Careys, making its presentation in one of their associated households highly probable.

⁵⁹ *Memoirs of Robert Cary Earl of Monmouth*, ed. by G.H Powell (London: De La More Press, 1905), pp.33-34.

⁶⁰ Hatfield House, CP 36/60.

⁶¹ See I.A. Shapiro, 'Richard II or Richard III or ...?', *SQ*, 9:2 (1958), 204-06.

Indeed, *Richard II* possibly presented itself as a suitable first playbook for Wise to publish from the newly-renamed 'Chamberlain's Men' in the period before the earl of Essex's Irish expedition in 1599, his trial for treason in 1600, and the so-called Essex rebellion in 1601, events which made Ricardian subject matter more problematic (owing to the connections pursued by contemporaries between Elizabeth I and Richard II, and between Essex and Bolingbroke).⁶² Following Henry Carey's death on 23 July 1596, the company had reverted to the name 'Hunsdon's Men', when William Brooke, Baron Cobham, was appointed Lord Chamberlain. However, when Cobham died on 6 March 1597, George Carey was invested with the chamberlainship (on 14 April 1597) and his company of players regained their former title of the Chamberlain's Men. On 29 August 1597, *Richard II*, the first play ever attributed to the Chamberlain's Men on its title page, was entered in the Stationers' Register, reaching the bookstalls later that year and containing the title-page ascription 'As it hath beene publicly acted by the right Honourable the Lorde Chamberlaine his Seruants.'⁶³ The close timing of these events and Wise's emerging position as the publisher for Carey's patronized writers suggests that Carey, as the Lord Chamberlain, may have encouraged the dissemination of his company's plays in print, especially in light of his involvement in literary patronage. Although some critics have suggested that the surge in plays printed from the Chamberlain's Men in 1597-98 represents the company's attempt to generate income from the sale of manuscripts in response to recent playhouse closures and the efforts of city authorities to prohibit theatrical performances, this is a problematic assertion, both because such sales would provide minimal revenue and the efforts to restrict performances do not appear to have lasted very long. Following the letter of complaint from the Lord Mayor to the Privy Council on 28 July 1597 (often connected to the *Isle of Dogs* debacle), limitations on playing continued only

⁶² See Evelyn May Albright, 'Shakespeare's *Richard II* and the Essex Conspiracy', *PMLA*, 42:3 (1927), 686-720.

⁶³ *The Tragedie of King Richard the second* (STC 22307, 1597), A1r. Further references will be given after quotations. *Romeo and Juliet* was also printed in 1597; however, the title page attributes this play to 'L. of Hunsdon his Seruants' (STC 22322, 1597), A2r, which suggests it may have been printed before George Carey's investiture as Lord Chamberlain in April.

until October 1597; Henslowe's *Diary*, for example, shows that regular playing patterns resumed from 11 October (a few days after the warrant for the release of Gabriel Spenser, Robert Shaw, and Ben Jonson on 8 October).⁶⁴ Instead, the publication developments seem more closely connected to the interests and professional position of the new Lord Chamberlain.⁶⁵

The appeal of *1* and *2 Henry IV* to the Carey family is also reflected in extant letters and references. As reported in a letter from Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney in March 1600, George Carey entertained an ambassador from Burgundy, where 'in the After Noone his Plaiers acted, before Vereiken [the ambassador], Sir John Old Castell, to his great Contentment'.⁶⁶ Rather than indicating Wilson, Drayton, Munday, and Hathaway's *Sir John Oldcastle*, the play was probably *1 Henry IV*, performed by the Chamberlain's Men at Hunsdon House. Aristocratic patrons occasionally arranged for their playing companies to perform in their households in order to entertain guests; it would have been unusual for Carey to invite a rival company, the Admiral's Men, to perform *Sir John Oldcastle*, a play which was written as a critical response to Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV*.⁶⁷ Instead, Whyte's letter suggests that the Careys were playfully adopting an alternative title for Shakespeare's play that drew attention to the controversy surrounding its initial use of the name 'Sir John Oldcastle' for Falstaff. Shakespeare's choice of Oldcastle had attracted opposition from the Cobham family, who traced their lineage to the Lollard leader, Sir John Oldcastle, martyred in 1417 during the reign of Henry V. As recounted by Richard James (1592-1638), the Cobhams apparently objected to the defamatory application of their ancestor's name and

⁶⁴ Chambers, *ES*, IV, pp.321-23; Foakes (ed.), p.60.

⁶⁵ Cf. Thomas L. Berger, 'Shakespeare Writ Small: Early Single Editions of Shakespeare's Plays' in *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text*, ed. by Andrew Murphy (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp.57-70; Blayney, 'Publication', pp.385-87.

⁶⁶ Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, II, p.322.

⁶⁷ Suzanne Westfall, "'A Commonty a Christmas gambold or a tumbling trick': Household Theatre', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by Cox and Kastan, pp.39-58.

requested it be changed.⁶⁸ The name ‘Sir John Falstaff’ was adopted in performance and in the printed texts; however, traces of Shakespeare’s original choice remain in both *1* and *2 Henry IV* through speech prefixes and stage directions, in addition to Hal’s reference to Falstaff as ‘my old lad of the castle’.⁶⁹ Regardless of Shakespeare’s initial design in naming his character Oldcastle (whether this was, for example, a deliberate swipe at the family that had interrupted the transition of the chamberlainship from Henry to George Carey), this debacle was notorious. It provoked a theatrical response in the form of the aforementioned *Sir John Oldcastle* (performed in 1599 and printed in 1600) for the Admiral’s Men, which offers a defensive portrait of a proto-Protestant leader that, utilizing Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* as a source, methodically counters the presentation of Falstaff-Oldcastle in Shakespeare’s plays and makes it an unlikely choice for Carey’s private theatricals.

While prompting censorship and alteration, the use of Oldcastle’s name was clearly relished by some in the Carey circle, as suggested by this alternative performance title in 1600. A similar recognition and application is apparent in a letter (dated between 25 and 28 February 1598) from Essex to Sir Robert Cecil, which constitutes one of the earliest written references to Falstaff and coincides with the entry of *1 Henry IV* in the Stationers’ Register on 25 February. In an addendum to the letter, Essex asks that Cecil ‘commend me allso to Alex. Ratcliff and tell him for newes his sister is maryed to Sir John Falstaff’.⁷⁰ This allusion, humorously referring to Sir Henry Brooke (of the Cobham family, and a descendent of Oldcastle) as Falstaff, draws attention to the notoriety surrounding Shakespeare’s character and the Cobham family. Indeed, Wise’s publication of the *Henry IV* plays is particularly alert to their contemporary context, and the title pages of both parts advertise the inclusion of Sir John Falstaff (Part 1, for example, contains ‘the humorous conceits of Sir Iohn Falstalffe’,

⁶⁸ BL Add. MS 33785, fol.2 (‘The Legend and defense of the Noble Knight and Martyr Sir John Oldcastle’, 1625).

⁶⁹ *The Historie of Henrie the Fovrth* (STC 22280: 1598), A4r. Further references will be given after quotations.

⁷⁰ See Leslie Hotson, *Shakespeare’s Sonnets Dated And Other Essays* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1949), p.154.

A1r). The quarto editions seem to highlight the Oldcastle-Falstaff connection, while also presenting a suitably censored text for publication, exhibiting a tension between mollification of the authorities and a desire to elicit the very contemporary parallels elided through censorship. David Bevington has described the publication of *1 Henry IV* as an act of ‘goodwill’ to assist in ‘setting the record straight’ on the Oldcastle-Falstaff debacle, reasoning that ‘the company would not have turned the play over to the printers so soon without good reason’.⁷¹ However, this is unlikely, not least because of the problematic assumption that playbook publication was detrimental to a company’s performance prospects. Instead, both of the *Henry IV* playbooks attempt to pacify the authorities who objected to the original naming, while at the same time, insistently reminding readers of the dispute, as in the epilogue to *2 Henry IV*:

One word more I beseech you, if you bee not too much cloyd with fatte meate, our humble Author will continue the storie with sir Iohn in it, and make merry with faire Katharine of Fraunce, where (for any thing I knowe) Falstaffe shall die of sweat, vnlesse already a be killd with your harde opinions; for Olde-castle died Martyre, and this is not the man.⁷²

Reintroducing and emphasizing the association between Oldcastle and Falstaff at the end of the play is hardly the most effective means of quelling recollection of the debacle or offering an unambiguous placatory gesture. While Stern has demonstrated that prologues and epilogues were often kept separate from the play script and were usually performed when the play was new, which suggests this concluding reference to Oldcastle was not a regular part of *2 Henry IV* in performance, the epilogue’s inclusion at the end of the quarto edition allocates it that position of permanence as part of a printed text.⁷³ Significantly, the Folio text of *2 Henry IV* also contains a version of this epilogue, but one that is clearly set from a different manuscript.⁷⁴ The appearance of the epilogue in two different copy texts perhaps indicates

⁷¹ William Shakespeare, *Henry IV Part I*, ed. by David Bevington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp.87, 90.

⁷² *The second part of Henrie the fourth* (STC 22288, 1600), L1v. Further references will be given after quotations.

⁷³ Stern, *Documents*, pp.81-119.

⁷⁴ Q1 was probably set from Shakespeare’s foul papers; the copy for F was possibly another manuscript or prompt book. The different locations of the Epilogue’s prayer for the Queen in Q1 and F suggest that

that the ‘Oldcastle epilogue’ was an important feature of the play in performance, designed to keep the recollection of the debacle fresh in audiences’ minds. The editions, appealing to the politics and interests of the Carey family, emphasize the connection between Oldcastle and Falstaff, and the plays’ potential for application to contemporary individuals and events, while ostensibly offering an apology or defence.

This topical association with the Carey family can also be seen in the representation of the rebellion, chiefly staged in the north and west of England, in *1 Henry IV*. These events had a more recent parallel in the Northern Rebellion of 1569, which was an attempt by Catholic nobles to depose Elizabeth on behalf of Mary, Queen of Scots, who had a claim on the English throne. Significantly, Henry Carey was in command of Elizabeth’s military forces and, following the cessation of the conflict, Carey, his children, and extended family worked to maintain control and management of the border area. Shakespeare’s play seems particularly alert to this parallel and, as Bevington observes, Henry IV’s description of civil uprising recalls the *Homily Against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* (1570), which was incorporated into *The Second Tome of Homilies* (1571) immediately after the Northern Rebellion and was required to be read regularly in churches.⁷⁵ In addressing the rebellious lords at the Battle of Shrewsbury, Henry IV declares:

These things indeed you haue articulate,
Proclaime at market Crosses, read in Churches,
To face the garment of rebellion
With some fine colour that may please the eye
Of fickle changeings and poore discontents,
Which gape and rub the elbow at the newes
Of hurly burly innouation,
And neuer yet did insurrection want
Such water colors to impaint his cause
Nor moody beggars staruing for a time,
Of pell mell hauocke and confusion.

[I2v]

the Oldcastle paragraphs were added at a later stage to the manuscript underlying Q1. For a further discussion of the texts, see René Weis in *Henry IV Part 2*, ed. by René Weis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp.14-16, 90-110.

⁷⁵ *Henry IV Part I*, p.263.

This speech, condemning the rebels' attempts at justifying and legitimating their uprising, 'facing the garment of rebellion | With some fine colour', shares parallels with a similar representation in the *Homily Against Disobedience* from 1570, which Shakespeare may have utilized:

Though not only great multitudes of the rude and rascall commons, but sometime also men of great wyt, nobilitie, and auctoritie haue moued rebellions against their lawefull princes [...] though they woulde pretende sundrie causes, as the redresse of the common wealth (whiche rebellion of all other mischeefes doth most destroy) or reformation of religion (whereas rebellion is most agaynst all true religion) though they haue made a great shewe of holy meaning [...] though they display, and beare about ensignes, and banners, whiche are acceptable vnto the rude ignoraunt common people, great multitudes of whom by suche false pretences and shewes they do deceaue.⁷⁶

As the *Homily* was prepared in response to the 1569 Northern Rebellion, the connection between Henry IV's description of the insurrectionists' strategies and the *Homily*'s concern with the ways in which popular rebellion 'pretende[s] sundrie causes', such as 'the redresse of the common wealth', furthers an associative link between Shakespeare, the Carey family, and Wise as the play's publisher. While it is not the aim to suggest that a particular positioning inheres in these plays, implying a singular interpretation in relation to ideas of rebellion and the influence of patrons, the connection between the *Henry IV* plays and the political events and texts closely associated with the Carey family draws attention to the plays' possible appeal to the Careys, while also suggesting how these plays may have been viewed by their aristocratic patrons.

The early textual history of *1 Henry IV* is relatively straightforward, consisting of two quartos in 1598 and a third in 1599, the later quartos deriving from the first, and all containing traces of censorship concerning the character name 'John Oldcastle'. The textual transmission of *2 Henry IV* is more complicated and possibly relates to the promotion of topical parallels between the play and recent events, especially in connection to the earl of Essex's downfall.

⁷⁶ *Against Disobedience and Wylfull Rebellion*, F4r-v.

Indeed, the play was first published in 1600, shortly after Essex's return from his failed campaign in Ireland. The extant witnesses of Q1 include two variant textual states (QA and QB), QB containing an additional scene that is absent from QA (3.1 in F and modern editions).⁷⁷ The provenance of the scene is uncertain, but it is clearly a later addition and one which the stationers made a considerable effort to include.⁷⁸ An examination of the texts reveal that QA was set and printed first and that E3 and E4 were reset with two new leaves (E5 and E6, containing the extra scene). The new sheet (E3-E6) was then stitched in with E1 and E2 from the first issue.⁷⁹

The nature of the added material is largely political, relating to Richard II's deposition and the history dramatized by Shakespeare in his earlier play. When Q1 was published in 1600 (shortly after its entry in the Stationers' Register on 23 August 1600), the political climate in England in view of Essex's abortive Irish expedition and his trial for insubordination was particularly tense, and Essex had only recently been granted his liberty on 26 August, following his confinement in York House and Essex House. The additional scene in QB shows Henry IV reflecting on his usurpation of the monarchy from Richard II. Henry presents himself as reluctant in his accession 'but that necessitie so bowed the state, | That I and greatnesse were compeled to kisse' (E4v). Recurrent references to necessity compelling unexpected action and an inability to control subjects' loyalties feature throughout this scene and have immediate parallels with Essex's situation, the accusations levelled against him, and Essex's own view of necessity motivating his actions.⁸⁰ In a letter to James VI of Scotland

⁷⁷ The additional scene appears from E3v to E5v. *The Second part of Henrie the fourth* (STC 22288a, 1600). Further references will be given after quotations.

⁷⁸ John Jowett and Gary Taylor conjecture that the omission of 3.1 in QA resulted from 'its being Shakespeare's addition to his own foul papers' and was contained on a separate manuscript leaf. Their examination of the cancel's watermarks and printer Valentine Simmes' type and titles demonstrates that the additional scene was probably printed and added in late 1600. See 'The Three Texts of 2 *Henry IV*', *SB*, 40 (1987), 31-50 (pp.33-34, 38).

⁷⁹ Jowett and Taylor, pp.31-34. The number of surviving copies of Q1 (ten copies of QA and eleven of QB) reveal that both versions of the play were sold and circulated. See also René Weis for an alternative explanation that the shorter version of Q1 is the result of self-censorship on the part of the Chamberlain's Men, who were concerned about the passage's potential for offence (*Henry IV Part 2*, pp.78-99).

⁸⁰ Albright, pp.686-720.

following his trial in 1600, Essex declared, 'Now am I summoned of all sides to stop the malice, the wickednes and madnes of these men, and to releeeve my poore cuntry that grones under hir burthen. Now doth reason, honour and conscience command me to be active'.⁸¹ Evoking ideas of the necessity of rebellion and oppositional action in *Henry IV* could, therefore, introduce topical associations with Essex's position and the discourses surrounding his Irish campaign and recent trial.

The indirectness of the scene's contemporary applications probably protected it from censorship. Following his return from Ireland in 1600, direct references or allusions to Essex, and the drawing of parallels between Richard II's reign and the Elizabethan political climate of the 1590s were particularly dangerous. Surviving letters reveal their writers' anxiety about correspondence being intercepted and comments misconstrued. On 20 February 1600, John Harington wrote to Anthony Standen, describing his reception by Elizabeth after his own involvement in the meeting with Hugh O'Neill, second earl of Tyrone in Ireland, and concluding with the following remark that refers to Essex in strikingly oblique terms:

You wonder I write nothing of *one*: - believe me I hear nothing; but *he* is where he was, and I think must be, till these great businesses be concluded.⁸²

Harington's extreme circumspection, avoiding a direct reference to Essex and his affairs, indicates the precariousness of such commentary. The added scene in QB encourages topical associations, while also eschewing a clear allusion. It is not the intention to suggest that this material was sought out in order to heighten the play's application; Jowett and Taylor show how the scene was potentially included on a separate manuscript sheet and accidentally omitted in the first printing.⁸³ However, it is clear that the stationers involved in the play's publication (Valentine Simmes and Wise as printer and publisher, respectively) made a considerable effort to include the material, which could be owing to the fact that it contained

⁸¹ BL Add. MS 31022 (R), fol.105r-108r.

⁸² Norman McClure (ed.), *The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930), p.80.

⁸³ Jowett and Taylor, pp.35-38.

matters of intense political interest (as well as a representation of Henry IV drawn from Samuel Daniel's *Civil Wars*, sold nearby) without being overtly dangerous or contentious.⁸⁴

Wise's quartos and their textual history reveal a tension between careful adaptation as a result of censorship and a desire to court or capitalize on heightened political applications. George Carey's position as Lord Chamberlain, privy councillor, and patron of the Chamberlain's Men draws attention to this intersection of interests. Carey was, for example, involved in Star Chamber discussions concerning Essex's conduct during the Irish campaign. In 1599, Carey had, as Wallace MacCaffrey describes, 'painted a lurid picture of the dangers to the kingdom's security' posed by Essex's army in Ireland: in the Star Chamber at the end of Michaelmas 1599, 'the Lord Chamberlain said that with such a spirit as my Lord of Essex, the army sent to Ireland might have passed through Spain and endangered the kingdom'.⁸⁵ At the same time, Carey (and his family) were interested in the applications of professional plays from the Chamberlain's Men (as in the Oldcastle controversy), which were implicitly connected to Carey through the appearance of his company's name on the title-pages of most Wise editions. While Wise's publication of the *Henry IV* plays does not promote a singular view of the events dramatized in line with the politics of the company's patron, it certainly gestures towards the interests of the Careys and the topicality of the plays' representations, which is further highlighted by the plays' textual history.

The selection of Shakespeare's history plays for publication may have also been designed to appeal to wider readerly interests in historical events and accounts, conferring a degree of prestige on Wise's publications and the plays of the company patronized by the Lord Chamberlain. As Patricia Cahill observes, military treatises, including Robert Barret's *Theory and Practice of Modern Wars* (which was published by William Ponsonby in 1598 and offered

⁸⁴ Jowett and Taylor show that Shakespeare's portrait of the sleep-deprived Henry IV clearly derives from Daniel's *First Four Books of the Civil Wars*. See 'Three Texts', pp.35-36.

⁸⁵ MacCaffrey, para.32; *CSP Domestic*, V, p.351.

for wholesale in close proximity to Wise's bookshop), were published in large numbers during the 1590s, and the importance of actively reading such historical and political material with an eye to contemporary applications was repeatedly emphasized.⁸⁶ Sir Philip Sidney outlines the proper books which should be studied to assist in 'the trade of our lives' as those concerning politics and 'souldiery' that either 'profess the arte' or recount the 'historyes' which show 'what hath bene done', a description that reflects many of the texts dedicated to the Careys.⁸⁷ As Findlen notes, 'many Renaissance scholars considered history to be the first of the seven liberal arts that an educated person should cultivate', and although professional history plays were not outlined as part of this programme of aristocratic and humanist education through historical exempla, Wise's publications retain a connection through their subject matter and emphases to other historiographical texts at the end of the sixteenth century.⁸⁸

Indeed, when considering the London book trade during the late 1590s, English monarchical history proved particularly marketable, being readily appropriated for contemporary commentary, especially in relation to the issue of succession. At this time, an increasing number of political tracts, incurring varying degrees of censorship, approached the question of Elizabeth's successor directly, including *A conference about the next succession to the crown of England* (published in 1595 and usually attributed to Robert Persons), Peter Wentworth's *A pithy exhortation to her Majesty for establishing her successor to the crown* (1598), and John Hayward's *An answer to the first part of a certain conference concerning succession* (1603), all of which incorporated medieval English monarchs, including Richard II and Henry IV, into their discussions. Other publications explored similar contemporary issues through more sustained historical representations of English monarchs and the Wars of

⁸⁶ Patricia Cahill, 'Nation Formation and the English History Plays' in *Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, ed. by Dutton and Howard, pp.70-93 (pp.84-85).

⁸⁷ Quoted in Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, "'Studied for Action": How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy', *Past & Present*, 129 (1990), 30-78, (p.39).

⁸⁸ Findlen, p.101.

the Roses, as in Samuel Daniel's *Civil Wars* (with the first four books published in 1595), Michael Drayton's *Mortimeriados: The lamentable civil wars of Edward II and the barons* (1596, and later revised and published as *The Barons' Wars* in 1603), and John Hayward's *The First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV* (1599). Interconnections between history and contemporary politics recur throughout this period, as in the succession tracts, which consistently use historical exempla, and in historical publications, which are often closely linked to contemporary political issues. As Blair Worden argues, political and historical thought regularly coincide, which draws attention to the generic hybridity that is characteristic of the early modern period more broadly.⁸⁹

Wise's quarto editions are situated within this discourse, corresponding to non-dramatic publication patterns and readerly interest in medieval English history, and offering the potential for topical applications. The arranged performance of the 'deposyng and kylllyng of Kyng Rychard the Second' on 7 February 1601 (the eve of the Essex 'rebellion') was probably Shakespeare's *Richard II*, and this engagement resulted in a flurry of different 'readings' as the individuals variously involved in the performance, the attempted uprising, and the examination of offenders negotiated the play's connection to contemporary affairs.⁹⁰ Indeed, if the testimony of Augustine Phillips and his claim that the 'play of Kyng Rychard' was 'so old & so long out of vse as that they shold have small or no company at yt' is to be taken as an accurate reflection of the company's views of Shakespeare's play (and not merely his strategy under examination), then it is perhaps Wise's three printed editions of the play between 1597 and 1598, as well as other non-dramatic engagements with the reign of Richard II, that allocated the performance revival in 1601 a heightened currency.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Worden, 'Historians and Poets', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 68:1-2 (2005), 71-93 (p.72).

⁹⁰ NA: *State Papers Domestic: Elizabeth I*, SP 12/278, fol.85r (18 February 1601, 'Examination of Augustine Phillips'). See also NA: *State Papers Domestic: Elizabeth I*, SP 12/278/78, fol.141r (17 February 1601, 'Examination of Sir Gelly Meyrick'). The connection of this performance to *Richard II* has been disputed, but extant evidence suggests that Shakespeare's play is the likeliest candidate. See Paul Hammer, 'Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising', *SQ*, 59 (2008), 1-35.

⁹¹ NA: SP 12/278, fol.85r.

Certainly, the publication history of *Richard II* suggests a connection to contemporary political anxieties and patterns in non-dramatic historical texts, particularly in relation to the so-called deposition or 'Parliament sceane' (part of Act 4 Scene 1 in modern editions, and occupying H1v to H3v in Q4).⁹² This scene did not appear in Q1 (1597), Q2 (1598) or Q3 (1598), and was first presented in Q4 (1608), well after the succession of James I in 1603. The provenance of this scene has been regularly (and inconclusively) debated: David Bergeron and Leeds Barroll, for example, have suggested that censorship was not involved and the scene was added at a later date, while Janet Clare, David Bevington, Grace Ioppolo, Paul Hammer, and Cyndia Clegg have argued that the 'Parliament sceane' was cut from the earlier quarto editions as a result of some form of censorship.⁹³ Clegg's assessment provides a particularly convincing case for censorship in relation to the scene's presentation of the competing roles of parliament and the monarchy, a debate that is foregrounded in other contemporary texts. While Clegg suggests that an examination of press censorship during the Elizabethan period 'finds not only a government far less effective in maintaining controls and surveillance of the press but also one far less interested in these matters than many critics have assumed', she draws attention to the notable censorship campaign about Robert Persons's *Conference about the next succession*, a work that the government 'regarded as highly seditious'.⁹⁴ Persons was an English Jesuit priest, who spent most of his life in exile on the Continent, and he was an outspoken critic of the Anglican Church and Elizabeth I's government. His *Conference about the next succession*, published under the name of Doleman, 'created a minor sensation in England' as it weighed in on the question of Elizabeth's successor, a topic that was officially banned. Persons's text argued for the involvement of parliamentary debate in determining succession, contained a provocative

⁹² William Shakespeare, *The tragedie of King Richard the second* (STC 22310, 1608). There is also a version of the fourth quarto with a variant title page, which advertises the 'new additions of the Parliament sceane, and the deposing of King Richard' (STC 22311). Further references will be given after quotations.

⁹³ Cyndia Susan Clegg, "'By the choise and inuitation of al the realme": *Richard II* and Elizabethan Press Censorship', *SQ*, 48:4 (1997), 432-48 (pp.432-34).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.435 437.

dedication to the earl of Essex, and featured a discussion of Richard II's reign that challenged his right to the English throne, further connecting Richard II with Elizabeth I and political developments during the late 1590s.⁹⁵ Although the reign of Richard II had been regularly presented in earlier chronicle accounts, including Holinshed's, Hall's, and Stow's, as a cautionary exemplum for future monarchs, the concentrated references and representations of Richard II during the 1590s, as well as other monarchs involved in the Wars of the Roses, are indicative of a heightened political topicality. Such engagements featured in shorter, more affordable, and more widely circulated accounts than the pricier chronicles, which made them accessible, current, and reflective of topical political thought during the decade.

Wise's editions are central in this discourse, and they demonstrate the importance of considering dramatic historical engagements in tandem with non-dramatic accounts and debates. Indeed, the printed presentation of Wise's playbooks furthers their connection to non-dramatic texts. *Richard III*, for example, contains an italicized list of people slain at the Battle of Bosworth, and the speeches of Richard and Richmond to their armies are prefaced with the italicized headings 'His oration to his souldiers' and 'His Oration to his army', respectively, endowing the commercial play with the visual signifiers of non-dramatic accounts.⁹⁶ In the rest of the printed text, names (aside from those in stage directions and speech prefixes) are not italicized and the term 'oration' is particularly unusual as part of a stage direction, which suggests an explanatory note for readers rather than a direction for stage action.⁹⁷ These typographical and textual features indicate that the play is being re-presented for readers and they highlight the potential of playbooks to be used as part of the active reading encouraged by Sidney and other writers of the period.

⁹⁵ Victor Houlston, 'Persons [Parsons], Robert (1546–1610)', *ODNB*, para.18. Robert Persons, *Conference about the next succession to the crowne of England* (STC 19398, 1595), *2r-*3r.

⁹⁶ *The tragedy of King Richard the third* (STC 22314, 1597), M1v, M2v.

⁹⁷ See also John Jowett's discussion of the orations and their stage directions, which he describes as 'literary in quality'. (*Richard III*, pp.384-85).

The importance of the London book trade in shaping Wise's playbook enterprise can be further witnessed through the position of Wise in Paul's Cross Churchyard. Using Peter Blayney's *The Bookshops in Paul's Cross Churchyard* (1990), the location and surrounding environment of Wise's bookshop can be determined in considerable detail.⁹⁸ Wise operated at the Sign of the Angel in the north-east corner of Paul's Churchyard from about 1593 until his disappearance from historical records in 1603. During this period, his surrounding business neighbours included John Oxenbridge at the Parrot (1595-1599), William Aspley at the Tiger's Head (1599-1600), Simon Waterson at the Crown (1589-1634), and John Harrison (1) (1584-1594) and William Leake (1596-1601) at the Sign of the White Greyhound (see Figure 1).

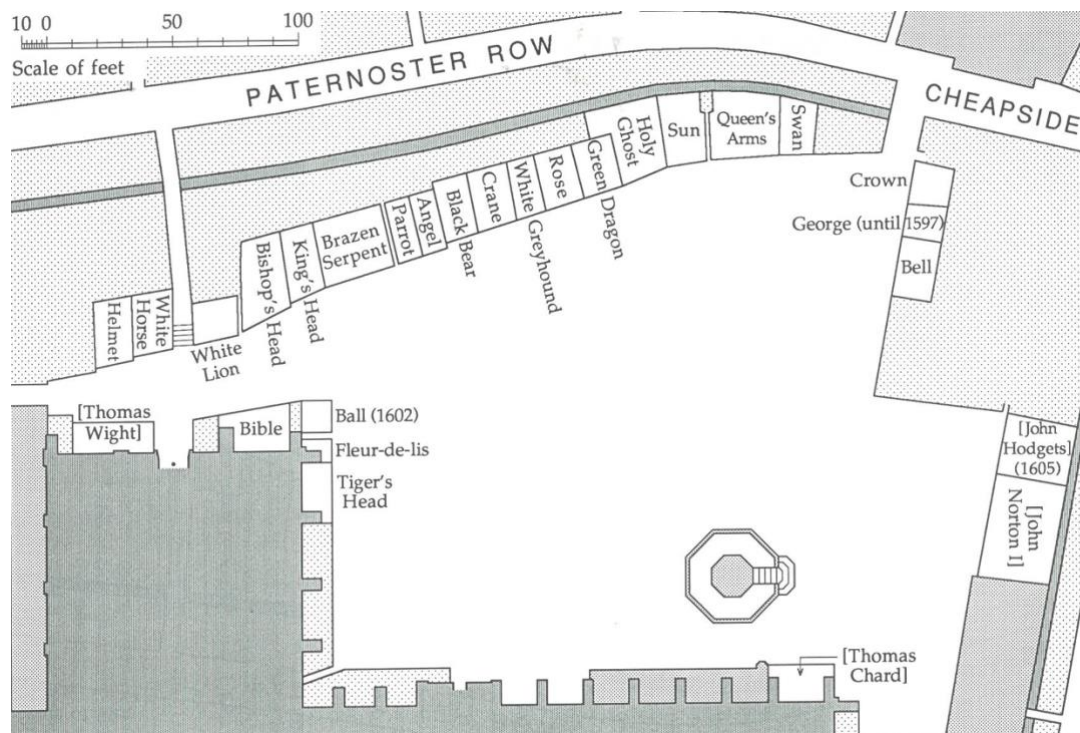


Figure 2: Paul's Cross Churchyard in 1600, © Peter W. M. Blayney

During the mid-to-late 1590s, this area of the churchyard witnessed a significant concentration of historical publications, a considerable number of which were about English monarchical history. Judging by the number of editions, these texts proved exceptionally popular with

⁹⁸ *The Bookshops in Paul's Cross Churchyard*, Occasional Papers of the Bibliographical Society, No. 5 (London: Bibliographical Society, 1990), p.76.

early readers. For example, Simon Waterson at the Sign of the Crown published multiple editions of Daniel's *Civil Wars*, beginning in 1595 with the first four books, continuing in 1599 with a fifth book, and adding a sixth book in 1601 as part of *The Works of Samuel Daniel*. Focusing on the conflicts between the 'houses of Lancaster and Yorke' and featuring the reigns of Richard II to Richard III (in its later continuations), *The Civil Wars* was immensely influential and its impact, according to John Pitcher, 'was felt throughout the literary scene at once'.⁹⁹ Indeed, Pitcher suggests that Shakespeare drew on the first four books of *The Civil Wars* for his play, *Richard II*, 'within weeks of the poem going on sale', which was probably in November 1595.¹⁰⁰ The depth, subtlety, and inwardness of Daniel's historical characters, the significance and maturity of Queen Isabel that departs from the chronicle sources, and the emphasis on the two central competitors, Richard and Bolingbroke, all informed Shakespeare's treatment of the same material, and significantly, both Daniel's and Shakespeare's texts were offered for wholesale in Paul's Cross Churchyard. The connections between these texts probably played a role in encouraging Wise's investment, and the ensuing success of Wise's quartos (with nine editions having been published by 1600) may have, reciprocally, motivated the expansions to *The Civil Wars*, especially as it was Waterson, Daniel's publisher, who asked Daniel in about 1600 for the additions.¹⁰¹ Waterson was clearly aware of the consumer demand for this type of literary publication and the reading public's wider interests in medieval English monarchs and their battles (as featured in Wise's editions), while also recognizing Daniel's literary reputation and connections to the Sidney circle, which could benefit his own position as a publisher.

In summary, Wise's playbooks were shaped by two distinct, but interconnected influences – a patronage connection with the Carey family, and the geography and publication patterns of the London book trade – both of which promoted an engagement with late-medieval

⁹⁹ Pitcher, para.7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, para.7.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, para.11.

monarchical history and the conflicts of the Wars of the Roses. Wise's publications exemplify the interdependence of aristocratic and commercial factors in the transmission of texts, and his venture involved the selection and re-presentation of plays from George Carey's company that featured the medieval history that was being so readily circulated in the wider book market and regularly appropriated in contemporary political discourses. Indeed, it is likely that Wise's editions had immediate consequences for the publication of professional plays by other stationers. Millington's second editions of *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (both in 1600), and Creede's publication of *The Famous Victories of Henry V* and *The Scottish History of James IV* (plays which Creede had previously entered in the Stationers' Register in 1594, but had not printed) were possibly motivated by Wise's profitable venture in publishing Shakespeare's history plays. Suggesting a marketing parallel with Wise's quartos, all of these plays emphasize their historical or quasi-historical subject matter on their title pages, which is particularly striking in relation to *James IV*, a play that is only tangentially connected to historical accounts. This playbook contains a title-page reference to James IV's death, when he was 'slaine at Flodden', an event which does not actually feature in the play but, through its title-page incorporation, seems designed to situate the text within the monarchical histories prominent on the London bookstalls in the late 1590s.¹⁰²

Between the Angel and the White Greyhound: Shaping Shakespeare's identity in print

In 1597, at the time of Wise's initial investment in Shakespeare's English history plays – a move appealing to the interests of George Carey, the preoccupations of other non-dramatic publications, and the preferences of the reading public – Shakespeare's reputation as a published and attributed writer was mostly limited to his narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, first published in 1593 and 1594, respectively. Adding to the complex but interconnected influences shaping the publication of Shakespeare's histories, it

¹⁰² Robert Greene, *The Scottish Historie of Iames the fourth* (STC 12308, 1598), A2r.

is likely that the success of these narrative poems also played a role in encouraging Wise's particular interest in Shakespeare as a dramatist from the Chamberlain's Men. These considerations show how the selection, presentation, and position of these most frequently discussed history plays can be motivated by factors removed from an immediate political or historical context, which is the usual emphasis of critical studies of Shakespeare's histories. This section will highlight the importance of looking beyond historical and political influences to an evaluation of the wider range of agents and interactions shaping the publication of texts, suggesting an alternative, depoliticized reading of Shakespeare's histories that is centred on the growing reputation of Shakespeare as a professional dramatist. More than just having consequences for understanding historical engagement during the period, this section will draw attention to the role of the Wise editions in establishing Shakespeare's position as the most published and named professional dramatist at the end of the sixteenth century, a factor that has shaped later publication ventures, such as the First Folio, and led to the centrality of Shakespeare within history play studies.

In 1598, Shakespeare's name first appeared – unambiguously – on the title pages of playbooks, when the second editions of *Richard II* and *Richard III*, were published by Wise, and the first (extant) edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* was published by Cuthbert Burby.¹⁰³ As a first edition, *Love's Labour's Lost* may appear to warrant particular attention, but the reprinted histories published by Wise point to a more developed, consistent, and specific strategy in their paratextual attributions than Burby's edition. Indeed, while Burby was one of the main stationers involved in the publication of commercial plays during the 1590s, responsible for playbooks such as *Orlando Furioso* (Q1 1594, Q2 1599), *Mother Bombie* (Q1 1594, Q2 1598),

¹⁰³ In 1595, *Locrine* was published with a title-page attribution to 'W.S.', but this designation is far from unambiguous and does not convey or advertise the same specificity of authorship. There may also have been an earlier edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* in 1597, from which no copies survive. A printed edition is referred to in a manuscript catalogue from the Viscount Conway with a date of 1597 and the title page of the 1598 edition describes the text as 'Newly corrected and augmented', which could indicate that there was an earlier version. See Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.461.

The Cobbler's Prophecy (Q1 1594), *The Taming of a Shrew* (Q1 1594, Q2 1596), and *Romeo and Juliet* (Q2 1599), his dramatic publications do not prioritize authorial attributions, unlike Wise's later quartos. Aside from *Love's Labour's Lost*, Burby's only other play to contain a title-page attribution is *The Cobbler's Prophecy* (to 'Robert Wilson, Gent.'), and significantly, the full attribution in *Love's Labour's Lost* reads 'Newly corrected and augmented | By W. Shakespeare', which implicitly aligns Shakespeare's name, through the spacing and phrasing of the attribution, with the processes of correction and expansion, rather than initial authorship.¹⁰⁴ Wise, on the other hand, with his exclusive concentration on plays by Shakespeare, published these editions with regular title-page attributions from 1598 onwards. Regardless of whether it was Burby's edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* or one of Wise's reprints that first appeared on bookstalls with a paratextual attribution in 1598, it is Wise's publication practices that are especially significant, owing to their relative consistency.

While Wise's first editions of *Richard II* and *Richard III* in 1597 do not contain any attributions, suggesting that the marketability of Shakespeare's name was not immediately apparent and corresponding to the previous non-appearance of Shakespeare's name and the inconsistent appearance of other dramatists' names on playbook title pages, Wise's editions from 1598 regularly carry the attribution 'By William Shakespeare' (see Figure 3).¹⁰⁵ This development marks a shift in the status and importance of Shakespeare's name in relation to his dramatic works in print, which is further signalled by the first appearance of his name in the Stationers' Register on 23 August 1600.¹⁰⁶ Wise was again involved in this introduction, the inclusion of Shakespeare's name being part of Wise's combined entry for *2 Henry IV* and

¹⁰⁴ See also Helen Smith, who describes the line break as imposing 'an uneasy division between the work of revision and a claim for authorship' ('"To London all"? mapping Shakespeare in print, 1593-1598', in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Margaret Jane Kidnie and Sonia Massai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp.69-86 (p.85). Robert Wilson, *The Coblers Prophetie* (STC 25781, 1594), A2r; William Shakespeare, *A Pleasant Conceited Comedie Called Loues labors lost* (STC 22294, 1598), A1r.

¹⁰⁵ Of Wise's play editions, *Richard II* Q2 (1598) and Q3 (1598); *Richard III* Q2 (1598) and Q3 (1602); *1 Henry IV* Q2 (1599); *2 Henry IV* Q1 (1600), and *Much Ado About Nothing* Q1 (1600) contain attributions to Shakespeare.

¹⁰⁶ Hooks, *Selling*, pp.66-68; Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p.63.

Much Ado About Nothing.¹⁰⁷ From 1598 onwards, Wise's editions and publishing strategies display a burgeoning interest in the incorporation of authorial attributions to Shakespeare, shaping prevailing critical perceptions of Shakespeare's dominance as a professional dramatist at the end of the sixteenth century and aligning his name specifically with printed history plays.



Figure 3: Title pages from *Richard II* (Q2 1598; BL C.34.k.42), *Richard III* (Q2 1598; BL C.34.k.47); *1 Henry IV* (Q1 1599; BL C.12.h.12); and *2 Henry IV* (Q1 1600; BL C.12.g.20), showing attributions to Shakespeare

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The one exception to Wise's attribution practices concerns the publication of *1 Henry IV*; however, the publishing history of the play and the influence of the patronage network involving Wise, Shakespeare, and the Chamberlain's Men provide an explanation for this

¹⁰⁷ This Stationers' Register entry, made out to Wise and William Aspley, reads: 'Two bookes. the one called *Muche a Doo about nothinge*. Th[e] other *the second parte of the history of kinge Henry the IIIJth with the humours of Sir John Fallstaff*. Wrytten by master Shakespere.' Arber, III, p.63v.

variation. Printed in 1598, on the basis of the Stationers' Register entry dated 25 February 1598, the first edition (often labelled Q0) of *I Henry IV* survives in one sheet only (C1-4), the title page being no longer extant, which makes it impossible to determine conclusively the play's history of attribution.¹⁰⁸ The second edition, which was also printed in 1598 (therefore providing a *terminus ad quem* for the first printed text), contains no reference to Shakespeare or the Chamberlain's Men, while the third edition in 1599 claims the play was 'Newly corrected by W. Shake-speare'.¹⁰⁹ Although it is possible that the first two editions of *I Henry IV* were actually printed earlier in 1598 than the second quartos of *Richard II* and *Richard III* (which contained the first attributions), and therefore do not constitute an exception to the overarching patterns described, the phrasing on the 1599 title page and the absence of any references to the Chamberlain's Men on subsequent editions potentially indicate a connection to the Oldcastle controversy, discussed previously. While the title pages of all the extant editions encourage recollection of the association between Falstaff and the Cobham family, by drawing attention to this character in their paratexts, the 1598 title page refrains from mentioning those involved in the offence, namely Shakespeare and George Carey's company. The 1599 title page introduces Shakespeare as a corrector, in contrast to the more assertive claims of authorship on the other Wise quartos, which suggests an attempt to emphasize the play's 'corrected' state, especially in relation to its *political* correction.

The introduction of Shakespearian title-page attributions was possibly influenced by the publication of *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), which contained signed dedications by Shakespeare to his patron, Henry Wriothesley, third earl of Southampton, and were the only printed texts associated with Shakespeare's name as author before 1598. These narrative poems were initially printed by Richard Field for John Harrison and proved hugely successful with readers, judging by their numerous subsequent editions and the scarcity of extant copies (suggesting they were, quite literally, read to destruction by

¹⁰⁸ For the play's textual history, see *Henry IV Part I*, Bevington (ed.), p.85-110.

¹⁰⁹ *The Historie of Henrie the Fovrth* (STC 22281, 1599), A1r.

their early readers).¹¹⁰ Harrison published reprints of *Venus and Adonis* in 1594, 1595(?), and 1596, and *Lucrece* in 1598 and twice in 1600.¹¹¹ He transferred his rights to *Venus and Adonis* in 1596 to William Leake, who published two further editions in 1599.¹¹² Significantly, all of these editions (with the exception of Harrison's 1598 and 1600 reprints of *Lucrece*) were offered for wholesale at the Sign of the White Greyhound, just three doors (or about twenty feet) away from Wise's shop in Paul's Cross (see Figure 1).¹¹³ With the editions of the narrative poems and seven of Wise's playbooks displaying authorial attributions and patronage associations, this small section of Paul's Churchyard between the signs of the Angel and the White Greyhound became a locus for Shakespearian wholesale and paratextual attribution in London at the end of the sixteenth century. Wise's exclusive concentration on Shakespeare's plays and his later inclusion of authorial paratexts in the second editions of *Richard II* and *Richard III* were perhaps shaped by the earlier strategies of the narrative poems and their ongoing success with readers. Given the visibility of these attributions, the printed title pages being, as Stern has argued, used as advertisements and posted around the bookstalls, this area of London could have been associated in the minds of stationers and readers with the publication of Shakespeare's dramatic and non-dramatic works, especially as no other part of London exhibited a similar concentration of Shakespeare's attributed works at this time.¹¹⁴

This claim for a reciprocal connection between Shakespeare's dramatic and non-dramatic texts is further supported by the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599. Until this

¹¹⁰ Colin Burrow suggests there were further editions of *Venus and Adonis*, which were 'completely destroyed by their eager consumers'. William Shakespeare, *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, ed. by Colin Burrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 7.

¹¹¹ The title page of the third edition of *Venus and Adonis* is no longer extant. Conjectured date of publication is taken from the STC.

¹¹² Richard Field initially entered *Venus and Adonis* in the Stationers' Register on 18 April 1593, before he transferred his rights to John Harrison on 25 June 1594, who then published a further three editions between 1594 and 1596, before transferring ownership to William Leake on 25 June 1596. *Lucrece* was first entered to Harrison on 9 May 1594, but, unlike *Venus and Adonis*, Harrison retained his rights to the poem.

¹¹³ Leake took over Harrison's premises at the White Greyhound in 1596, and Harrison moved to the nearby Greyhound on Paternoster Row.

¹¹⁴ Stern, *Documents*, pp.36-62. See also Adam Hooks, 'Shakespeare at the White Greyhound', *SS* 64 (2011), 260-75.

time, Shakespeare's name had only appeared on the title pages of his printed *playbooks*; the narrative poems contained signed dedications, which was common practice for poetic collections.¹¹⁵ However, in 1599, the second edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim* became the first non-dramatic text attributed to Shakespeare on its title page, which describes the collection as 'By W. Shakespeare'.¹¹⁶ Interestingly, this octavo collection of poems (only five of which are known to be by Shakespeare) was printed for William Jaggard and William Leake, and offered for wholesale, along with Shakespeare's narrative poems, at the White Greyhound.¹¹⁷ Given the geographical proximity of the bookshops, *The Passionate Pilgrim's* title-page attribution may have been influenced by the Wise quartos and their success with readers, thus furthering the link between these two bookshops and their stationers. During the late 1590s, this area between the signs of the Angel and the White Greyhound must have witnessed a notable concentration of title pages advertising works by 'Shakespeare' (including *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *1* and *2 Henry IV*, and *The Passionate Pilgrim*, all with Shakespearian attributions, as well as title-page advertisements for *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*), encouraging an association between Shakespeare as a poet and as a dramatist for the stage, and shaping the literary reputation and characteristics of this part of Paul's Churchyard.

By 1600, the impact of Wise's paratexts, made more significant through the success of these editions with readers, can be seen through the widespread incorporation of Shakespearian title-page attributions, as they started to appear more regularly in playbooks published by other stationers. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (published in 1600 for Thomas Fisher), *The Merchant of Venice* (published in 1600 for Thomas Hayes), *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

¹¹⁵ See Burrow in *Complete Sonnets and Poems*, p.6.

¹¹⁶ *The Passionate Pilgrime* (STC 22342, 1599), A2r. No copies of the title page for the first edition (STC 22341.5) are extant. This edition was probably also published in 1599, or possibly in late 1598, after the printer of the volume, Thomas Judson, set up his press in September 1598. See Burrow's discussion in Shakespeare, *Complete Sonnets*, p.74.

¹¹⁷ See Burrow in *Complete Sonnets and Poems* (pp.74-82) for a discussion of the collection's authorship. As Burrow notes, of the twenty poems in the volume, five can be attributed to Shakespeare (numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, and 16), four can be confidently attributed to other writers, and eleven are of unknown authorship.

(published in 1602 for Arthur Johnson) and *Hamlet* (published in 1603 for Nicholas Ling and John Trundle) all contain the title-page attribution 'By William Shakespeare'. As Lukas Erne observes, by 1599, Shakespeare had emerged as the most attributed commercial dramatist in print: five playbook editions contained references to his authorship by 1599, which increased to nine in 1600. Robert Greene, in comparison, was the second most attributed dramatist at the end of the sixteenth century: his name had appeared on only five playbook editions by 1600.¹¹⁸

Wise's editions of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *1 and 2 Henry IV* highlight the active role of stationers in the selection, presentation, and reception of printed drama, and the ways in which the confluence of patrons and commercial factors encouraged the publication of Shakespeare's English histories from the Chamberlain's Men. Capitalizing on Shakespeare's success as a poet, Wise's quartos established the practice of incorporating consistent Shakespearian attributions on the title pages of dramatic texts, a significant factor in aligning Shakespeare's name with historical dramatizations at the end of the sixteenth century and raising the status of playbooks and the issue of their authorship, contributing to, as Joseph Loewenstein describes, 'the process by which authorship was converted into a new form of economic agency'.¹¹⁹ The Wise quartos represent a group of texts that were recognized and utilized for their connections to contemporary politics, non-dramatic historical discourses (such as Daniel's *Civil Wars* and Persons's *Conference about the next succession*), and the emerging significance of Shakespeare as a published writer, an assessment that draws together the local influences of Wise, George Carey, and the wider book trade.

These connections between aristocratic and commercial agents in the dissemination of Shakespeare's history plays in print can also offer an explanation for the pronounced decrease in the number of Shakespearian first editions witnessed after 1603. Between 1604 and 1623,

¹¹⁸ Erne, 'Popularity', pp. 26-27.

¹¹⁹ Loewenstein, p.25.

only four new plays by Shakespeare received a printed edition: *King Lear* in 1608, *Troilus and Cressida* in 1609, *Pericles* in 1609, and *Othello* in 1622. Theories have been proposed for this change in publication pattern and frequency, including Shakespeare's own reassessment of the purposes of playbook publication, as well as shifting views on the merits of textual transmission on the part of the King's Men, suggesting that Shakespeare and his company became more reluctant to release manuscripts to stationers.¹²⁰ However, consistent evidence for the King's Men seeking to control the registration and publication of their plays, appropriating privileges more firmly residing with stationers, does not arise until later in the Jacobean and Caroline periods, which will be addressed in Chapter 4 and 5. As discussed earlier, the objective and targets of the 1600 staying entry are unclear and, on the basis of the subsequent publication of three of the four specified texts, the entry may be indicative of a cooperative working relationship between the Chamberlain's Men and select stationers that does not aim to prevent publication (as the later injunctions clearly do).

Instead, at the end of the Elizabethan period, significant changes to the network, agents, and influences discussed in this chapter provide the likeliest explanation for this decrease in publication. Between 1599 and 1603, George Carey's health started to decline, affecting his professional engagements and activities. His will was drawn up on 4 May 1599; in 1601, Sir John Stanhop was appointed Vice Chamberlain due to Carey's absence; and on 4 May 1603, shortly before his death on 8 September, Carey was relieved of his chamberlainship, which passed to Thomas Howard, first earl of Suffolk, who had been acting lord chamberlain since 28 December 1602. At the same time as Carey was divesting himself of his professional responsibilities, Wise stopped publishing and disappeared from historical records. The rights to Shakespeare's plays and the sermons of Thomas Playfere, which were Wise's most successful and prolific editions, were transferred in the Stationers' Register on 25 June 1603 to Matthew Law. As Wise suddenly emerged in St Paul's Churchyard in 1593 as the publisher

¹²⁰ Cf. Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, pp.106-09.

of authors patronized by the Careys, so he similarly disappeared from historical records following the decline and death of George Carey, and James I's adoption of the Chamberlain's Men as his royally patronized company upon his accession in 1603.¹²¹

At the same time as Wise withdrew from publication and Carey's health declined, the literary landscape of Paul's Churchyard altered and the focal point of Shakespearian wholesale between the Angel and the White Greyhound started to break down. From 1603, the stationers involved in Shakespearian publication changed or moved premises: as mentioned above, Matthew Law at the Sign of the Fox near St Austin's Gate (in the southeast corner of St Paul's) received the rights to Shakespeare's history plays, and John Harrison moved to Paternoster Row, taking with him the publication rights to *Venus and Adonis*. Only William Leake, who held the rights to *Lucrece* and *The Passionate Pilgrim*, remained in Paul's Cross at the Sign of the Holy Ghost. Thus, the prior concentration of Shakespearian dramatic and non-dramatic publication within a spatial range of approximately twenty feet was ultimately a short-lived (and yet highly significant) enterprise, motivated by patronage connections and commercial networks, which dissipated with these changes in agents at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Although these changes are coincidental, rather than part of a designed strategy, they are perhaps the most important factors affecting the dissemination of later plays in print.

Redefining 'history': The wider performance repertoires of the Chamberlain's Men and the Admiral's Men

This chapter has thus far considered the agency of a specific patronage network involving Wise, George Carey, and the Chamberlain's Men in the publication of four of Shakespeare's English monarchical history plays, drawing attention to the factors that contributed to their unprecedented success with readers, as well as their influence on dramatic and non-dramatic publications, the concept of authorship in commercial playbooks, and the narratives of history

¹²¹ Cf. Massai, 'Shakespeare, text and paratext', p.6.

play development which tend to foreground these plays to the exclusion of others. During the late 1590s, patterns in the publication of history plays are dominated by Wise's quartos, and Shakespeare emerges as the central commercial dramatist for the history play in a printed form. This recognition of Shakespeare's position has led to the assumption that the success and dominance of Shakespeare's playbooks indicates a corresponding success rate in the wider performance repertory of the Chamberlain's Men and other companies in London. As outlined in the introduction to this study, discussions of the history play on stage during the late 1590s have tended to isolate Shakespeare's plays, assuming a direct correlation between print and stage success, and ignoring the fact that the theatre and the book trade had different audiences and agendas. As Holger Syme argues, 'the world of commercial publishing [...] was not commensurate with or analogous to that of the theatre in the sixteenth century' and 'the danger lies in assuming that everything that was valued and broadly influential has survived and that the literary development of early modern drama was largely a print phenomenon, with trajectories of influence dominated by published plays'.¹²²

At the end of the sixteenth century, there is a significant difference between published history plays, dominated by Wise's quarto editions, and the evidence of historical drama on stage, which can be found in extant performance accounts and theatrical documents, such as *Henslowe's Diary*. Evidence for lost plays, for example, has been largely ignored by critics, including Griffin, who are intent on constructing an overarching narrative of the history play and producing a fixed definition of the genre; as Syme argues, 'the most influential narratives of generic developments depend for their very elegance and power on the erasure of vast swathes of literary history'.¹²³ In contrast to the selective group of history plays published during the late 1590s which focus on English monarchical history, records for history plays performed on the early modern stage suggest a much wider range of subject matter and greater

¹²² Syme, 'Meaning of Success', pp.519, 524.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, pp.522-24. Cf. Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary Theory* (London: Verso, 2005).

variety in approach. As opposed to centring on medieval English history, as in Shakespeare's printed plays and patterns in other non-dramatic texts (including Daniel's *Civil Wars*), the commercial stage witnessed a profusion of historical dramatizations that are less reflective of print representatives and the narrower historiographical focus of published works, a significant factor in understanding the range and definition of 'history' as presented in early modern plays.

The dominance of Shakespeare's plays in discussions of the performance repertory of the Chamberlain's Men can be explained by a consideration of extant documentary evidence. Drawing on the repertory assessments provided by Gurr in *The Shakespeare Company* and Knutson in 'Shakespeare's Repertory', about forty-five plays (lost and extant) can be connected to the Chamberlain's Men between 1594 and 1603. These plays would have made up a small proportion of their full repertory, the majority of which has disappeared without leaving any record. Over half of these plays (about twenty-six of the forty-five) are associated to some degree with Shakespeare, and offer a limited and unrepresentative repertory from which to extrapolate larger patterns in performance.¹²⁴ The dominance of Shakespeare largely stems from the selection of his plays for publication: during this period, twenty-seven playbook editions with a connection to the Chamberlain's Men were printed, and Shakespeare's plays comprise twenty of these editions.¹²⁵

As Syme explains, the paucity of extant evidence and surviving plays from the Chamberlain's Men has led to a 'documentary vacuum', where 'tethering a history of the troupe to what has survived – Shakespeare's plays and court performance records – is almost the scholar's only choice'.¹²⁶ However, evidence concerning the Admiral's Men is very different: the survival of more extensive accounts and performance records provide a comprehensive basis from

¹²⁴ *Shakespeare Company*, pp.281-92 and Knutson, 'Shakespeare's Repertory' in *Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by Kastan, pp.346-61.

¹²⁵ Statistics calculated using *DEEP*.

¹²⁶ Syme, 'Meaning of Success', p.493.

which to assess the position of history plays within wider company repertoires. As Knutson demonstrates, patterns in the repertory of the Admiral's Men correspond to evidence for similar offerings from the Chamberlain's Men:

[T]he repertory of Shakespeare's company looks very much like the repertoires of other companies in size, variety, and distribution of plays by genre; [...] like other companies, they acquired plays in fashionable genres, [and] they and other companies echoed their own and each other's plays in duplicate subject matter, serials, sequels, and spin-offs.¹²⁷

Knutson's assessment draws attention to responsive patterns in history play performances by the Admiral's and Chamberlain's Men between 1594 and 1599 in, for example, the staging of the two parts of *Henry IV* and *Henry V* by Shakespeare's company, and the thirteen performances of a play recorded as 'harey the v' by the Admiral's Men between 28 November 1595 and 15 July 1596, in addition to *Sir John Oldcastle*, a direct reaction to the *Henry IV* plays from the Chamberlain's Men.¹²⁸ In light of the evidence for these responsive patterns and the interconnections between theatrical companies, the extant records associated with the Admiral's Men offer the possibility of more thoroughly assessing the range of historical engagements on the early modern stage at the end of the sixteenth century.

This evaluation necessitates a reliance on evidence relating to lost plays, which, as this study consistently suggests, is crucial in developing an understanding of dramatic historical engagement throughout the period. Gurr estimates that extant texts comprise only one-sixth of the known repertory of the Admiral's Men, and further plays have disappeared without leaving any record of their existence.¹²⁹ While the analysis of evidence for lost plays is complicated by the limited information contained in extant documents (often no more than a title and approximate performance dates), it is possible in many cases to reach some understanding of subject matter and approach through careful speculation. Henslowe's records provide extensive references to plays performed by the Admiral's Men (and

¹²⁷ Knutson, 'Shakespeare's Repertory', p.360.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.352.

¹²⁹ 'What is Lost of Shakespearean Plays, Besides a Few Titles?' in *Lost Plays*, ed. by McInnis and Steggle, pp.55-71 (p.59).

Worcester's Men) at the Rose during the late 1590s. Until 5 November 1597, these accounts record Henslowe's daily receipts from the theatre and provide a performance schedule; from November 1597 onwards, they record payments to dramatists for specific plays, together with costume expenses. A significant number of these plays' titles indicate subject matter arising from historical traditions, accounts, and chronicles. A selection of theatrical clusters can also be identified. In addition to medieval English monarchical history, evidence from Henslowe's accounts suggests the prominence of early British history, classical history, biblical history, and recent history during the final years of the Elizabethan period, indicating a notable disparity between the position of the history play within performance repertoires and its representation in printed playbooks, which in this period is centred on medieval English history. Appendix C provides a chart of some of these lost history plays, which are arranged into specific clusters on the basis of their probable subject matter. The chart gives a brief summary of the plays' possible content, largely based on the evidence of the titles recorded in Henslowe's accounts, which frequently make reference to a historical figure or event.

This division between stage and print can be connected to non-dramatic publications during the late 1590s, which regularly drew on the reigns of medieval English monarchs, while engaging with contemporary political issues and anxieties. Such publications include the successful (and reprinted) editions of Daniel's *Civil Wars* (starting in 1595); Drayton's *Mortimeriados* (1596), republished as *The Barons' War* (1603); and Warner's *Albion's England* (1586, 1589, 1592, 1596/1597, 1602), as well as editions of notorious texts such as Hayward's *First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV* (1599) and Persons's *Conference about the next succession* (1595). These publications examined medieval English history in ways that encouraged their applications to contemporary political issues, such as the Elizabethan succession crisis, ongoing military preparation in Ireland, and the growing threat of civil unrest and renewed conflict with Spain. Given these patterns in non-dramatic texts, it is possible that stationers were particularly interested in plays that dramatized similar material, as in Wise's quarto editions. While a number of factors affected the survival and transmission

of commercial plays from stage to page, stationers retained considerable agency in positively selecting which available plays to pursue, and an evaluation of market trends provides a possible explanation for their choices.

Henslowe's records, however, reveal that a much greater variety of histories were performed on the London stages than are represented in print. For example, plays dramatizing early British history were regularly and successfully presented on the commercial stages during the late 1590s, with, for example, 'Vortigern' recording thirteen performances between 1596 and 1597, and 'Chinon of England' receiving fourteen performances in 1596 and providing consistently high financial takings.¹³⁰ None of the plays engaging with legendary British history were printed or entered in the Stationers' Register, indicating that these histories had less immediate currency in the book trade during the late 1590s. This would change significantly on the accession of James I, who utilized 'Britain's' originary narratives and legendary past as part of his own mythologizing strategies (which are discussed at length in Chapter 3). During the early Jacobean period, legendary histories started to occupy a prominent position within the print market in both dramatic and non-dramatic texts. Between 1596 and 1603, however, no plays dramatizing early British history were printed, despite their density in performance records. It could be argued that theatres tended to favour the 'legendary' histories beloved by city guilds, which prioritized stories such as that of London's roots in Troynovant ('new Troy') in their own narratives of origin. Plays featuring early British history would perhaps display a tension between a celebration of conquest, imperial advancement, and classical heritage, and a threat of destruction and civic catastrophe, especially in relation to issues of succession. As Misha Teramura observes, plays such as 'The Conquest of Brute' responded to the theatrical demand for martial plays featuring a Tamburlainean overachiever. At the same time, they also promoted a 'sense of national interest and [suggested] that the imperial successes of the Britons [were] divinely sanctioned',

¹³⁰ Further details and sources for all the plays discussed in this section are provided in Appendix C.

as, in the chronicle accounts, the goddess Diana had prophesized the success of Brute's descendants.¹³¹ Other plays, such as 'Ferrex and Porrex', would have presented tragic civic events; this title (as recorded by Henslowe in March 1600) suggests a dramatic emphasis upon the reigns of Brute's two sons, which divided Britain and led to civil war.¹³² Coexisting with histories dramatizing fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English monarchs, the evidence offered by the titles of these plays implies a similar engagement with issues of succession, usurpation, rebellion, and conquest, helping to clarify what the extent was of historical engagement in early modern theatre. In contrast to history play studies that omit the lost legendary plays from their discussions, these plays were a vital part of the performance of history in the late 1590s.

At the opposite end of the temporal spectrum is the significant number of plays engaging with relatively recent history. The appeal of this subject matter for commercial dramatists is clear, given the notoriety surrounding many of the events and therefore their potential for attracting audiences. Plays such as 'The Overthrow of Turnholt' (performed in 1599 and engaging with the victory of Maurice of Nassau at Turnhout in 1597) and 'The Civil Wars of France' (performed in three parts between 1598 and 1599, and relating to the religious conflicts in France initiated by the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572) focused on recent military and political issues, while other plays, including 'Thomas Merry' and 'Page of Plymouth', both performed in 1599, drew on citizen histories, dramatizing two highly publicized murders from 1594 and 1591, respectively. Many of the events presented by these plays were topical and widely reported. 'Cutting Dick', a play performed by Worcester's Men at the Rose in 1602, probably focused on the highwayman Cutting Dick Evans who was captured and executed in 1601.¹³³ Evans was referred to in many contemporary accounts, including Dudley

¹³¹ 'Brute Parts: From Troy to Britain at the Rose, 1596-1600,' in *Lost Plays*, ed. by McInnis and Steggle, pp.127-47 (p.132).

¹³² Foakes (ed.), pp.132-34.

¹³³ Heywood was paid twenty shillings for additions to 'cvttyng dicke' on 20 September 1602 for Worcester's Men, who were playing at the Rose. Foakes (ed.), p.216.

Carleton's letter to John Chamberlain on 29 December 1601, in which Carleton describes how 'Evans, known as Cutting Dick, a notable robber in Wiltshire, is taken, and like to be hanged'.¹³⁴ Other well-known events and rumours formed the basis of topical plays, such as Dekker and Chettle's 'Sebastian King of Portugal' (May/June 1601), which capitalized on the frequent reports of Sebastian's alleged escape from the Battle of Three Kings (1578). John Chamberlain's letters contain regular references to the continually circulating reports of Sebastian's survival and his appearance in various European locations.¹³⁵ Though *A Larum for London*, dramatizing events based on the siege of Antwerp in 1575-76, was entered in the Stationers' Register on 29 May 1600 and published in 1602, the heightened currency of the lost plays and their relation to contemporary events may have made them less appealing for publishers because of the expectation that public interest in these matters would dissipate quickly.

As can be seen, performance accounts of lost and extant plays encourage a broad understanding of 'history' on the early modern stage during the late 1590s, and evidence from the repertory of the Admiral's Men indicates the presence of plays based on early British history, classical history, biblical history, and recent events. These histories are largely unrepresented in printed playbooks, which privilege English monarchical history. Indeed, the wide range of history plays in performance problematizes attempts at offering a specific definition of the genre, such as one deriving from the retrospective First Folio classification, or outlining a singular narrative trajectory. The concept of 'history', in both dramatic and non-dramatic forms, remained exceptionally fluid and was inconsistently applied during the period.

¹³⁴ *CSP Domestic*, VI, p.136.

¹³⁵ See letters dated 20 October 1598, 17 January 1599, 1 March 1599, 28 June 1599, 10 October 1600, and 22 December 1600 in McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, I, pp.48-50, 62-65, 69-71, 73-76, 106-07, 111-14.

Conclusions

This chapter has shown how the performance and publication agendas for history plays differed considerably at the end of the sixteenth century, the professional stage witnessing a wide range of historical engagements, while, by contrast, print had a narrower emphasis in which English monarchical histories (particularly, the plays of Shakespeare) were dominant. It has drawn attention to the enduring critical bias in favour of canonical printed representatives; previous studies have neither featured the conditions of textual production in their exegesis nor fully acknowledged the limitations imposed through their selective emphases. An understanding of the expansive range of histories presented on stage draws attention to the problems associated with teleological narratives of historiographical development, which insufficiently reflect the diverse engagements with history common throughout the period.

Between 1597 and 1600, history plays as printed playbooks are closely connected to non-dramatic publication trends. Shakespeare's histories occupy a central position and suggest an association (in terms of thematic, economic, and geographical considerations) with non-dramatic texts, such as Daniel's *Civil Wars*, Persons's *Conference touching the next succession*, and Shakespeare's narrative poems. This chapter has drawn attention to a complex network of patronage connections and commercial influences that have shaped the publication of Shakespeare's histories. It has suggested that a patronage network involving Andrew Wise, George Carey, and the Chamberlain's Men, together with the publication strategies of stationers at the White Greyhound in Paul's Cross, contributed to the selection and presentation of these plays as printed books. This chapter has argued that the collective agency of a range of producers is responsible for the publication of history plays, and that, during the late 1590s, these printed playbooks reveal local readings that are alert to the contemporary political appropriation of English monarchical histories and the growing significance of Shakespeare as a professional dramatist in print.

3

Translatio imperii: Shifting policies and histories in the court of**James I, 1604 – 1609**

I confesse I ha't from the Play-bookes,
And thinke they're more authentique.¹

In *The Devil is an Ass*, first performed in 1616 and published in 1631, Jonson satirizes the pursuit of historical understanding from the reading of playbooks, as opposed to the study of chronicles. In relating accounts of Thomas of Woodstock, Duke Humphrey, and Richard III, Fitzdottrel is not 'cunning i'the Chronicle', but has acquired his knowledge through plays dramatizing their lives, which he claims are 'more authentique'.² This humorous exchange raises several important points: firstly, it suggests the continuing prominence of plays dealing with the past and the ways in which history plays could become a replacement for other histories, as well as a target for satire. Secondly, it implies that an understanding of the past is to be acquired through reading *playbooks*, as opposed to attending the theatre, highlighting the interlocking role of printed historical dramas and non-dramatic works of historiography in engaging readers' interest in history. Finally, it intimates that plays could in some ways be 'more authentique' than chronicles owing to their performance context in which history is dramatized, re-enacted, and reshaped, a process that more directly represents the selection and refashioning of history that takes place (more covertly) in non-dramatic works of historiography. Considering the points raised by this exchange, critical accounts of the history play's decline and lack of currency in the early seventeenth century are surprising; it is one of the main concerns of Chapter 3 and 4 to redress this position and demonstrate that dramatic representations of the past continued throughout the Jacobean period, reaching particular

¹ Ben Jonson, *The Diuell is an Asse* (STC 14753.5, 1631), Q3v (Act II Scene IV, p. 120).

² *Ibid.*

prominence between 1605 and 1609 (the focus of this chapter), and between 1619 and 1625 (discussed in Chapter 4).

This chapter will concentrate on the prominence of dramatic and non-dramatic histories that engage with early British history, and will connect them to James I's use of similar histories as part of his initial self-presentation as the king of 'Great Britain'. It will draw on plays such as the anonymous *King Leir* (1605) and Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1608), as well those which weigh in on similar issues through the representations of recent monarchical history, including *When You See Me You Know Me* (1605) and *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1: 1605, Part 2: 1606), which, as Judith Spikes and Teresa Grant have argued, react to the politics and mythologizing strategies of the early Jacobean period.³ All of these plays, and a significant proportion of the non-dramatic histories considered in this chapter, were offered for wholesale from the same part of St Paul's Churchyard, and the majority were published by Nathaniel Butter. This concentration of texts and wholesale location draws attention to a particular publication strategy and network that motivated the selection and presentation of these texts in print. The connections between these plays and the significance of Butter as a publisher have been neglected by studies that concentrate on English monarchical history and tend to promote a narrative of the history play's decline during the Jacobean period.

History-play studies typically conclude at the end of the sixteenth century or on the accession of James I, allying the genre's perceived decline in popularity at the beginning of the seventeenth century with Shakespeare's abandonment of late-medieval monarchical history as his subject matter and with developments in historiography, such as an apparent transition from humanist and providential methods of engagement to antiquarian approaches. Rackin suggests that during the sixteenth century the union of poetry and history was disintegrating,

³ Judith Doolin Spikes, 'The Jacobean History Play and the Myth of the Elect Nation', *RD*, 8 (1977), 117-49 (p.126); Teresa Grant, 'History in the Making: The Case of Samuel Rowley's *When You See Me You Know Me* (1604/5)' in *English Historical Drama, 1500-1660: Forms Outside the Canon*, ed. by Teresa Grant and Barbara Ravelhofer (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp.125-57, (p.125).

and that by the seventeenth century, in the writings of Francis Bacon, William Camden, and John Stow, a consistent effort was being made to distinguish historiography from literature, the former fashioning itself as a distinct discipline.⁴ A departure from narrative, ‘politic’, and exemplarity models of historiography in favour of those based on the pursuit of evidence, documents, and artefacts is seen as complicating the presentation of history on stage, making the creation of dramas based on Tudor historical accounts, such as those by Holinshed, Hall, Grafton, and Foxe, somehow problematic and inauspicious for adaptation by dramatists.

However, as Kamps has discussed, while we can ‘discern the seeds of modern historiography’ in the early seventeenth century, it is clear that ‘nothing like a uniform approach either to the nature or to the purpose of history-writing had emerged’ and it is certainly not possible to describe these seeds as taking hold in the public mind and entirely subsuming the presentation of history on stage.⁵ Indeed, a central aim of this study is to show how new developments and precedents in historiography do not necessarily infiltrate and uproot theatrical practices or the full spectrum of non-dramatic historical engagements, especially not immediately. Moreover, it is arguably still the case in modern historiography that charting a distinct division between literature and history is inherently problematic, especially in discussions of earlier British history, which are dependent on narrative records, poetry, and chronicles that often present conflicting views of the past and do not privilege historical accuracy within their retellings, as witnessed, for example, in the divergent accounts surrounding the Battle of Agincourt in the English and French traditions.⁶

This inaccessibility of the past that ultimately precludes such distinctions between literature and history was certainly recognized during the early modern period, and as Findlen suggests, ‘for every [Renaissance] historian who argued for the analytical qualities of his discipline,

⁴ Rackin, pp.14-32.

⁵ Kamps, *Historiography*, p.29.

⁶ Cf. Anne Curry, *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000).

there were others who insisted on and defended the empirical beauty of description'.⁷ Tensions between opposing approaches are even visible within the same text. In the second edition of *A Survey of London* (1603), for example, John Stow suggests the importance of an evidential basis for writing the history of London, noting in the dedicatory epistle that he has 'attempted the discouery of London' by examining 'sundry antiquities' and conducting a 'search of Records'.⁸ However, Stow immediately qualifies this approach in the text's opening section, where he addresses Geoffrey of Monmouth's twelfth-century *Historia regum Britanniae*, which traces the foundation of London to 'Troian progenie', namely Brutus, the great-grandson of Aeneas, a narrative that had been challenged throughout the sixteenth century, beginning with Polydore Vergil's *Anglica historia* (first published in 1534).⁹ In the expanded second edition, Stow's assessment of this originary tradition introduces a reference to Livy, acknowledging the importance of such aggrandizing narratives, which can perform an integral role in the creation and transmission of a nation's (or city's) past:

But herein as Liuie the most famous Hystoriographer of the Romans writeth[:]
Antiquitie is pardonable, and hath an especiall priuiledge, by interlacing
diuine matters with humane, to make the first foundations of Cities more
honourable, more sacred, and as it were of greater maiestie.¹⁰

With this new addition to the 1603 text (which, as will be seen, closely connects to James I's uses of history), Stow's *Survey* draws attention to the tensions and interconnections between different historiographical approaches, blurring the practical distinctions between antiquarian or evidentiary methods and a humanist model that often shapes historical narratives to achieve an effect or purpose.

Alongside the major works of writers such as Stow, Camden, and Bacon, it is also important to address the shorter, cheaper, and more accessible publications that engaged with historical

⁷ Findlen, p.111.

⁸ *A Svrvey of London* (STC 23343, 1603), A2v.

⁹ *Ibid.*, B1r.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, B1r. This second edition advertises the text's expansion on its title page: 'Since by the same Author [i.e. Stow] increased, with diuers rare notes of Antiquity, and published in the yeare 1603' (A1r).

materials and flooded the London bookstalls. These texts are perhaps more illustrative of the range of historical discourses available to readers than the larger (and more expensive) Tudor and Stuart chronicles, which are unrepresentative of the entirety of non-dramatic historical writing during the period. These short and accessible publications propagate divergent narratives, preserve older approaches and traditions, and offer alternative views of historical engagement. For example, in contrast to critical accounts which suggest the dominance of antiquarian approaches to historiography in the seventeenth century, many printed pamphlets perpetuate a humanist approach that actively fashions political and historical narratives for exemplary purposes, as indicated in Thomas Dekker's *Work for Armourers* (1609):

I spent my howres in reading of Histories [...] By looking on those perspectiue glasses, I beheld kingdomes and people a farre off, came acquainted with their manners, their pollicies, their gouernment, their risings, and their downefalles: was present at their battailes, and (without danger to my selfe) vnlesse it were in greeuing to see States so ouerthrowne by the mutabilitie of Fortune, I saw those Empires vtterly brought to subuersion, which had beene terroures and triumphers ouer all the nations vpon earth.¹¹

Dekker's text from 1609 reiterates some of the uses of history suggested by earlier Elizabethan historiographical accounts, complicating notions of the widespread acceptance of new evidentiary approaches to history, as well as the idea that these developments would deter historical dramatizations on stage. Dekker describes histories as 'perspectiue glasses' that display the policies, battles, and downfalls of kingdoms and empires, and provide parallel narratives that can be applied to contemporary situations. This approach to history is indicative of the endurance of many sixteenth-century texts and models, including, for example, the dramatic speeches of *The Mirror for Magistrates* (first published in 1559), which were designed as warnings or 'mirrors' for governance, and the representations of historiography in Blundeville's *True order and method of writing and reading histories* (1574) and Sidney's *Defence of Poetry* (published 1595), both of which are discussed in the introduction.

¹¹ *Worke for Armourours* (STC 6536, 1609), B2v.

During the early Jacobean period, plays from the commercial theatres also continued to feature historical representations, aligning dramatizations of the past with the potential for contemporary applications. For example, Barnabe Barnes's *The Devil's Charter, or Pope Alexander VI*, which was first performed in 1606 by the King's Men and printed in 1607 for John Wright, dramatizes 'the Tragedie, | Of Roderigo Borgia lately Pope', who had ruled from 1492 to 1503.¹² As Astrid Stilma suggests, Barnes, who had been part of the militant Protestant faction surrounding the earl of Essex in the 1590s, offers 'a cautionary tale, confirming for his audience that Catholics are not to be trusted, as the Gunpowder Plot had recently shown'.¹³ In the aftermath of the 1605 plot, the play offers a repositioning of events from the reign of Pope Alexander VI in ways that were immediately applicable to its contemporary Jacobean context, while also engaging with historiographical debates. In the prologue, the chorus introduces himself as 'I Francis Guicciardine a Florentine', establishing an identification with the sixteenth-century Italian humanist historiographer, Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540), who was critical of papal corruption, and immediately suggesting a didactic impulse for the play that would resonate with official accounts of the Gunpowder Plot that attempted to refocus the intensely political implications of attempted regicide onto the unrepresentative scheming of Catholic malcontents.¹⁴ Moreover, by drawing attention to his Florentine origins, the chorus recalls that other famous Florentine, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), and the dramatic and non-dramatic appropriations of *The Prince* (*Il Principe*, first published in Italy in 1532) that had contributed to the use of Machiavelli's name as a byword for scheming and duplicity, including the influential presentation of 'Machiavel' as the chorus in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (performed in c.1589-90, but not published until 1633). By including a recent historiographer amongst its characters and recalling another, *The Devil's Charter* engages repeatedly with questions of historiographical representation and the

¹² *The Divils Charter* (STC 1466, 1607), A2r.

¹³ 'Angels, Demons and Political Action in Two Early Jacobean History Plays', *Critical Survey*, 23:2 (2011), 9-25 (p.15).

¹⁴ Barnes, A2r. See James I, *His Maiesties Speech in this last Session of Parliament* (STC 14392, 1605), C1v-C3r.

uses and transmission of history that highlight the continued importance of narrative accounts, as considered by the First Gentleman in Act 1:¹⁵

High Muse, which whilome vertues patronized,
In whose eternail rowles of memory
The famous acts of Princes were comprized
By force of euer-liuing Historie:
What shall wee doe to call thee backe againe?
True Chronicler of all immortall glory.

The play stages the refashioning of historical narratives to promote didactic and providential interpretations, while also exploring the paradox that, although the ‘eternail rowles of memory’ contained in chronicles suggest permanence, history is, in fact, ‘euer-living’, and is continually adapted by each act of recollection and in accordance with shifting purposes. Indeed, the historical Guicciardini had privileged the depiction of recent history, as opposed to the distant past, describing his *History of Italy* (*Storia d’Italia*, 1540) as a record of ‘those events which have occurred in Italy within our memory’, and providing an apt surrogate for a play that draws attention to the application of sixteenth-century history to a Jacobean political context.¹⁶ As opposed to the idea that the number of history plays declined rapidly in the early Jacobean period, this chapter will demonstrate that many plays on the stage and in print offered dramatizations of the past and that they pursued contemporary applications and explored historiographical methods in ways that do not suggest a sharp division between literature and history, or the prevalence of a particular approach to history. This hybridity can only be fully recognized by expanding the traditional critical emphasis on the works of Shakespeare and medieval English history.

Critical neglect can perhaps be explained by considering that a significant number of dramatic and non-dramatic texts during the early Jacobean period explored histories hitherto neglected in printed plays, pamphlets, and treatises. Print culture itself stimulated the production and transmission of historical works, which regularly remained some of the most frequently

¹⁵ Barnes, A4v.

¹⁶ Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, trans. by Sydney Alexander (New York: Collier Books, 1969), p.3.

printed genres. However, as Findlen suggests, widespread and intensive historical debates often took place at crucial political moments, such as ‘the inauguration of the Stuart regime in England’, and ‘complex, disturbing events seemed to stimulate the search for historical understanding and perspective’.¹⁷ Historical writing was closely connected with public and political life during the period. The accession of James I in 1603 brought a variety of new political issues to the fore. Central amongst these were James’s plans for the unification of England and Scotland, and the ensuing conflicts within parliament (and played out on stage and in printed texts) over the extent of the king’s prerogative and control over parliament. The plan to unite England with Scotland was controversial, dominating political debates between 1604 and 1608, but it was integral to James’s monarchical self-fashioning, and plans for the union of England and Scotland (under one royal style and with provisions made for further integration) were immediately apparent upon James’s inauguration. An accession medal was produced in 1603, naming James as the ‘emperor of the whole island of Britain’, and the new £1 coin (called ‘the Unite’) identified James as ‘King of Great Britain’, while also containing a Latin inscription from Ezekiel 37:22 – *Faciam eos in gentem unam* (‘I will make them one nation’).¹⁸

James’s promotion of ‘Britain’ as the preferred collective name for the countries over which he reigned was not a new styling. It is recorded in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae* (and subsequent medieval and Tudor chronicles) as the earliest name for the whole island: Holinshed begins his history of England in the second volume of the *Chronicles* by stating that ‘this our country [...] hath most generallie and of longest continuance beene knowne among all nations by the name of Britaine’.¹⁹ James’s adoption of this name of supposedly ancient pedigree was part of a legitimating and stabilizing strategy, bolstering his claim to the English throne and attempting to bring together two nations previously in conflict.

¹⁷ Findlen, p.116.

¹⁸ See James Shapiro, *1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear* (London: Faber, 2015), pp.40-41.

¹⁹ Holinshed (1587), A1r.

His efforts at furthering the union of England and Scotland hinged on the promotion of these originary accounts. When James's *Basilikon Doron* was published in England in 1603, the main text contained several important additions to the original 1599 edition, which had been published by Robert Waldegrave in Edinburgh when Elizabeth was still Queen of England. In both editions, which are dedicated to James's son, Prince Henry, and profess to be for the instruction 'of a Prince in all the points of his calling', James warns against dividing a kingdom, as it will 'leau[e] the seede of diuision and discord among your posteritie'.²⁰ However, the 1603 edition continues 'as befel to this Ile: by the diuision & assignement therof, to the three sonnes of Brutus, Locrine, Albanact, and Camber', thus appropriating English historical narratives and aligning Scotland (and James's claim) with rulers that were centrally part of an English tradition.²¹ By doing so, James attempted to create a common past, as Scottish histories usually traced the nation's origins to Scota, daughter of Pharaoh, and her Greek husband Gathelus, and not to Brutus. James's 'presentist' concerns are even more apparent in the longest addition to the 1603 text, which stresses the importance of a united England and Scotland (although still purporting to be written while Elizabeth was alive and therefore applicable to sixteenth-century politics):

So that euen as in the times of our Ancestors, the long warres and many bloody battles betwixt these two countries, bred a naturall and hereditarie hatred in euery of them, against the other: the vniting and welding of them hereafter in one, by all sort of friendship, commerce, and alliance, will by the contrarie, produce and maintaine a naturall and inseparable vnitie of loue amongst them. As we haue already (praise be to God) a great experience of the good beginning hereof, and of the quenching of the olde hate in the hearts of both the people; procured by the meanes of this long and happie amitie, betweene the Queene my dearest Sister and me; which during the whole time of both our raignes hath euer been inuiolably obserued.²²

This unannounced addition to the 1603 text indicates James's political aims upon his accession, promoting the project of unification and suggesting an historical precedent for a united 'Britain' that stressed the conflicts and dangers that ensued with its division.

²⁰ James I, *Basilikon Doron* (STC 14353, 1603),)(4r, H2r. In the 1599 edition (STC 14348), these lines appear on A4r and O2r.

²¹ *Basilikon Doron*, 1603, H2r.

²² *Ibid.*, L1r-v.

This prioritization of historical traditions from the twelfth century BC to the sixth century AD, while a part of chronicle histories such as Holinshed and Grafton, had not been a prominent feature of shorter historical accounts, pamphlets, treatises, or printed dramas during the previous decade. As discussed in Chapter 2, printed texts during the 1590s frequently privilege late-medieval English history, highlighting the exemplarity of their historical engagement and encouraging (occasionally problematic) topical applications to Elizabethan politics, as in, for example, Hayward's *First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV* (1599). While evidence of lost plays from the professional theatres suggests that early British history was popular on stage in the late 1590s, perhaps relating to the importance of these narratives within the city of London and its guilds, few plays dramatizing early British history reached a printed edition during this period (with the exception of *Locrine* in 1595). However, this situation started to change in the seventeenth century with the accession of James I. Plays examining legendary British history, such as *Nobody and Somebody* (c.1606) and *King Lear* (1608), feature in both company repertories and printed playbooks, using the historical material promoted by the Jacobean court and other writers who seized upon similar narratives.²³

Through considering a range of history plays from the King's Men, Queen Anne's Men, and Prince Henry's Men, alongside non-dramatic historical texts, this chapter will argue that, during the first decade of James's reign, historical engagement was closely connected to the politics and historiographical appropriations of the Jacobean court. The concept of *translatio imperii* (or 'transfer of rule'), in which power is transferred and invested in a single ruler or emperor, and is often traced to a genealogy of ancient traditions, is apt for describing James's strategies and characterizing the debates of the period. In response, the histories presented in printed narratives, pamphlets, ballads, plays, poetry, and pageants shifted in favour of those

²³ See especially the appendices which outline lost and extant early British history plays between 1560 and 1625 in Gordon McMullan, 'The colonization of early Britain on the Jacobean stage', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.119-40 (pp.138-40).

that had immediate currency within the Jacobean political climate, hence the frequent exploration of early British history, as well as recent histories that resonated with the pressing political issues of union and the extent of monarchical power. These patterns can be detected in a range of dramatic and non-dramatic works, the examination of which will form the first part of this chapter, together with a consideration of company repertories.

The second part of this chapter will focus on the publications sold at St Austin's Gate in Paul's Churchyard, and, in particular, on those offered by Nathaniel Butter. An analysis of Butter's published output suggests that he specialized in politically topical texts that appropriated a range of histories and that he attempted to associate these publications with the cachet of a powerful aristocratic patron, Philip Herbert, first earl of Montgomery, whose family seat in Pembrokeshire was also symbolically and ideologically significant within the Jacobean project of unification. A discussion of neighbouring stationer, Matthew Law, will further demonstrate how the publication of playbooks can be looked to for evidence of their political contemporaneity and how they may have been interpreted by early readers (including stationers), as suggested by the timing and presentation of Law's reprinted editions of Shakespeare's *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *1 Henry IV*. The practices of Butter and Law, with their respective concentration on first and reprint editions, will also be addressed as evidence for emerging patterns in playbook publication and investment that would significantly shape the market during the later Jacobean and Caroline periods.

At a broader level, this chapter will show that historical representations during the early seventeenth century indicate a fluid interpretation of the term 'history', alongside a variety of historiographical methods. Patterns of engagement do not suggest that theatrical dramatizations of the past diminished in response to a supposed dominance of antiquarian approaches in non-dramatic histories. Even those authors (such as Stow) who promote the use of records and artefacts as the basis of their histories express an interest in shaping the past to create specific political narratives, thus making it increasingly problematic to separate

historical writing into distinct approaches or strands of historiography. Similarly, historical engagement on the early Jacobean stage does not undergo a marked decline, and, instead, a diverse range of approaches and histories can be observed once the dominant critical narrative of the genre as equivalent to Shakespeare's plays and medieval English kings is discarded.

'There can be no great assurance of continuance': The influence of Jacobean political tensions on the development of the history play*

These bountiful beginnings raise all mens spirits and put them in great hopes, insomuch that not only protestants, but papists and puritanes, and the very poets with theyre ydle pamphlets promise themselves great part in his favour: so that to satisfie or please all, *hic labor hic opus est*: and wold be more then a mans worke.²⁴

The accession of James I in 1603 was greeted outwardly with ceremony and celebration, and as John Chamberlain suggests, Protestants, Catholics, Puritans, and poets alike indiscriminately flocked to the king for promotion and favour. James responded: between April 1603 and December 1604, he created 1,161 new knights, trebling the existing number and, according to Chamberlain, the 'bountiful beginnings' and revelling continued. The Jacobean court was filled with an endless array of 'matches, mariages, christnings, creations, knightings and such like, as yf this world wold last ever, and whatsoever els were new now, wold be very stale before yt came at you'.²⁵ The Chamberlain's Men were taken under James's direct patronage during this time, becoming the King's Men on 19 May 1603, and this alacrity suggests a royal interest in the theatre.

* From *A Treatise about the Union of England and Scotland*, a manuscript union tract likely written in 1604 (Trinity College Cambridge R5.15), which compares the union of England and Scotland to that of Spain and Portugal 'wherin there can be no great assurance of continuance'. Bruce Galloway and Brian Levack (eds.), *The Jacobean Union: Six Tracts of 1604* (Edinburgh: Clark Constable, 1985), p.47.

²⁴ Letter from John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton (dated 12 April 1603) in McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, I, p.192.

²⁵ Statistics for knighting given by Albert Tricomi in *Anticourt Drama in England 1603-1642* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), pp.8-9. Letter from Chamberlain to Carleton (dated 30 April 1605) in McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, I, p.205.

The King's Men remained the only official royal company for almost a year, before a court warrant dated 4 February 1604 indicated Queen Anne's adoption of the Blackfriars Boys as the Children of the Queen's Revels and another warrant on 19 February 1604 established Queen Anne's Men (formerly Worcester's) and Prince Henry's Men (formerly the Admiral's).²⁶ For James's official coronation on 15 March 1604 (which had been postponed due to the plague), royal servants were issued with red cloth to be fashioned into livery for the ceremony, and these included nine 'Players' of the king, ten of Queen Anne, and nine of Prince Henry, ostensibly forming a roster of the leading companies and players in 1604, all under royal patronage and involved in the spectacle of James's investiture.²⁷ Entertainments designed by Jonson, Middleton, and Dekker celebrated James's ceremonial entry into London, using the historiographical narratives James had already initiated in promoting his accession and project for unification. During the royal entertainment, the English and Scottish knights, Saint George and Saint Andrew, were designed to meet and be 'sworne into a League of Vnitie'.²⁸ The published text of Dekker's *Magnificent Entertainment* (1604) offers a description of Britain that similarly draws on the ideology utilized by 'this *Treasure* of a Kingdome (a Man-Ruler) hid so many yeares from vs' (A3v):

And then so rich an Empyre, whose fayre brest,
 Contaynes foure Kingdomes by your entrance blest
 By *Brute* diuided, but by you alone,
 All are againe vnited and made *One*. [I1r]

However, there was an undercurrent of uncertainty and concern beneath James's accession and his first actions as the self-styled *rex pacificus*: Philip Gawdy describes the throng that came to be knighted on James's coronation on 25 July 1603 as 'a skumm of suche as it wolde make a man sycke to thinke of them' and John Chamberlain's letters (as quoted above) reveal his tacit disapproval of James's court and those who flocked to it.²⁹ This juxtaposition of outward celebration and underlying tension was also characteristic of the political climate

²⁶ Gurr, *SPC*, pp.113-14.

²⁷ NA, LC 2/4/5. pp.77-80 (Progress of James I through the city of London).

²⁸ *The Magnificent Entertainment* (STC 6510, 1604), B1v. Further references are given after quotations.

²⁹ *Letters of Philip Gawdy*, ed. by Isaac Herbert Jeayes (London: Nichols, 1906), p.135.

during the first years of James's reign. The fundamental issues were the proposal of unification and what that encompassed, together with negotiating the extent of monarchical authority. James's demands for union were met with staunch resistance by both English and Scottish opponents, halting progression and frustrating the king, and, according to Arthur Wilson in his *History of Great Britain* (1653), 'the Streets swarm night and day with bloody quarrels, private Duels fomented, specially betwixt the English and Scots'.³⁰ As one commentator noted in 1604, 'there is nothing more in the mouthes of men then discoursing the Union of England and Scotland'.³¹ Between 1603 and 1605, at least twenty-eight tracts were written about the union; eleven of these were printed, and many of the others were clearly circulated in manuscript, judging by the number of extant manuscript copies. James felt parliament's opposition to union infringed on his royal prerogatives, and in a speech at Whitehall in 1607, he highlighted the impropriety of such resistance and its potential for international political instability, asking 'what will the neighbour Princes iudge, whose eyes are all fixed vpon the conclusion of this Action, but that the King is refused in his desire, whereby the Nation should bee taxed, and the King disgraced?'.³²

Fractures in the state of the fragile new dynasty were quickly becoming apparent. As Lisa Hopkins argues, the succession crisis which had dominated the last decade of Elizabeth's reign was not resolved upon James's accession – despite the provision of two male heirs, Prince Henry and Prince Charles – and 'there was some ambiguity about what was exactly being succeeded to': James was proclaimed king of England, Ireland, Scotland, and France, but the monarchical claim to France was significantly lacking in authority or control given that the last French territory, Calais, had been lost in 1558, and the future position of Scotland and Ireland within the perpetual jurisdiction of the monarch based in England was by no means certain.³³ One union tract argued that 'there can be no great assurance of continuance – leaving

³⁰ *The History of Great Britain* (W2888, 1653), E2v.

³¹ BL Stowe MS 158, fol.34, quoted in Galloway and Levack (eds.), p.xxviii.

³² James I, *The Workes Of The Most High And Mightie Prince, Iames* (STC 14344, 1616), Vu5r, p.513.

³³ *Drama and the Succession to the Crown, 1561-1633* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p.1.

neighbour people of so disagreeing affections, in such difference of estate and disjunction of commonwealth, which can breed nothing els but discontentment and enterteine their accustomed grudges until occasion serve of their disunion by rebellion of the one'.³⁴

Some of these issues were heightened by the fact that, unlike Elizabeth, who did not insistently promote theories of divine monarchical right or theorize explicitly about the nature of kingship, James wrote and spoke directly on the issues of kingly authority and royal prerogative in his texts *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598, 1603) and *Basilikon Doron* (1599, 1603), and in his speeches to the English parliament between 1604 and 1610.³⁵ James's justification of monarchical power, asserted emphatically and controversially on an international scale in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot by the Oath of Allegiance of 1606, which required absolute allegiance to James before the Pope, caused considerable political difficulties. Alongside James's apology for the oath (published anonymously in 1607 as *Triplici nodo, triplex cuneus* and then attributed to James in 1609 as *An Apology for the Oath of Allegiance*), it plunged parliament (and the nation, including its writers and dramatists) into theorizing about the nature of kingship, exposing the fissures and uncertainties surrounding monarchical authority and the relative position of church and king.

These political tensions are reflected in the ways in which both dramatic and non-dramatic texts from the early Jacobean period engaged with history and used the past to address contemporary events and anxieties, with certain types and periods of history emerging as prominent. Plays such as *Nobody and Somebody* (c.1606), *King Lear* (1608), *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron* (1608) and *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1: 1605 and Part 2: 1606) benefit from a reading that situates them historically, especially

³⁴ Galloway and Levack (eds.), p.47.

³⁵ William Carroll, 'Theories of Kingship in Shakespeare's England' in *Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, ed. by Dutton and Howard, pp.125-45 (pp.129-30).

because, as Kamps indicates, Jacobean history plays frequently probe the nature of historical representations.³⁶

Explorations of early British history feature prominently in these texts, brought to the fore by the accession of James I and the position of ‘Galfridian’ traditions (referencing Geoffrey of Monmouth) within official propagandistic narratives. The utilization of such narratives could be celebratory of the Stuart accession or alternatively suggestive of analogous civic catastrophes. For example, the anonymous *Treatise about the Union of England and Scotland* (1604) draws on early British history and naming to promote the union in line with James’s position:

There is no dowt but the imposition of one name to both the nations, such as should be thought meetest, by renewing the ancient appellation either of Albion or of Great Brittanie to the whole iland, and of Albanis or Brittons to both the people, might carrie much impression of amitie and be no small band to knit together the two peoples the faster.³⁷

In this case, an appeal to ancient precedents and historical narratives serves not merely as a model for the Jacobean state but as an active means of knitting together the two nations. Similarly, George Owen Harry’s *Genealogy of the High and Mighty Monarch, James* (1604) constructs the lineal descent of James from Noah and Brutus, while also outlining the Stuarts’ Welsh connections through Cadwallader and Owen Tudor to reinforce James’s monarchical claim to the whole island of Britain, as illustrated by the work’s elaborate title-page description, which offers a summary and interpretative positioning for the full text:

The GENEALOGY OF THE HIGH AND MIGHTY Monarch, James, by the grace of God, King of great Brittain, &c. with his lineall descent from Noah, by diuers direct lynes to Brutus, first Inhabiter of this Ile of Brittain; and from him to Cadwalader, the last King of the Brittish bloud; and from thence, sundry wayes to his Maiesty: wherein is playnly shewed his rightfull Title, by lawfull descent from the said Cadwalader, as well to the Kingdome of Brittain, as to the Principalities of Northwales and Southwales: together with a brieve Cronologie of the memorable Acts of the famous men touched in this Genealogy, and what time they were. Where also is handled the worthy

³⁶ Kamps, *Historiography*, pp.1-2.

³⁷ Galloway and Levack (eds.), p.61.

*descent of his Maiesties ancestour Owen Tudyr, and his affinity with most of the greatest Princes of Christendome.*³⁸

Plays from the commercial theatres similarly explored this mythical Jacobean line of descent from Noah to Brutus, Cadwallader, and Fleance, and finally to James. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, first performed in 1606 by the King's Men but not printed until the First Folio in 1623, includes, as indicated by the stage directions in the Folio, 'A shew of eight Kings, and Banquo last, with a glasse in his hand'.³⁹ This display represents the eight Stuart kings of Scotland, with the omission of Mary, Queen of Scots, James's mother, who was executed by Elizabeth in 1587; the glass (showing 'many more' kings) gestures towards the continuation of this line through James. The inclusion of Banquo in the display allies the Stuart kings to the mythical figure Banquo, whose son Fleance was said to have fled to Wales and impregnated a Welsh princess with a son, Walter Steward, who was the historical founder of the Stuart line. As William Carroll observes, this 'myth of lineal continuity appears in no history prior to that of Hector Boece in 1526, in the reign of James V', but it became increasingly prominent upon James I's accession to the English throne as, through the link between Banquo and Walter Steward, James had a claim on the Welsh crown, which bolstered his claim to the English throne.⁴⁰ In the play, Macbeth's observation that 'some I see, | That two-fold Balles, and trebble Scepters carry' (Mm6v) directly suggests the union of Scotland and England through the combining of monarchical attributes: English kings were invested with two sceptres and one orb, and Scottish kings with one sceptre and one orb. In this way, the play can be seen as engaging with the mythical histories and processes of legitimation that were widespread in early Jacobean England.

³⁸ *The Genealogy of the High and Mighty Monarch, James* (STC 12872, 1604), (a)1r.

³⁹ William Shakespeare, *The Tragedie of Macbeth* in *Comedies, Histories & Tragedies*, Mm6v. The stage direction is quoted as it appears in F, but is probably confused. Most editors amend (substantially) to 'A show of eight kings, the last with a glass in his hand, and Banquo'. Further references are given after quotations.

⁴⁰ Carroll, p.142.

However, invoking narratives of Britain's Trojan ancestors and their descendants could, instead of suggesting national celebration and achievement, be emblematic of civic disorder, division, and war, even within accounts that seem designed to promote the union of England and Scotland. The reigns of a number of legendary monarchs involve narratives of division and disintegration, leading to national catastrophe. As Misha Teramura describes, Troy was an emblem of destruction and defeat, as much as it could evoke images of heroic warriors and leaders, and the Jacobean privileging of early British history encouraged a range of dramatic responses.⁴¹ Shakespeare's *King Lear* is one of the most obvious examples of a play that uses early British history and, in particular, the reign of a monarch who shares significant parallels with the originary figures of Brutus and his three sons to explore the division and disintegration of a united Britain. As Gordon McMullan argues, *King Lear*'s selection and presentation of history serves 'to underline the fundamentally divided origins and orientation of "Great Britain"'.⁴² Similarly, the anonymous *Nobody and Somebody*, performed by Queen Anne's Men, entered in the Stationers' Register on 12 March 1606, and most likely printed in the same year, dramatizes the legendary histories of two British kings, Archigallo and Elidure, examining the instability of royal authority through the deposition of Archigallo by his nobility and the reluctant accession of Elidure, who is crowned King of Britain three times, in response to changing political alliances.⁴³

The publication of the anonymous *King Leir* in 1605 is also highly significant. Drawing on similar chronicle accounts as those for Shakespeare's later play (and being one of Shakespeare's sources), *King Leir* was first performed by Queen Elizabeth's Men and entered in the Stationers' Register to Edward White on 14 May 1594. White did not publish the play, however, and it was transferred initially to Simon Stafford and then to John Wright on 8 May 1605, and printed in that year for Wright. The title page describes the play as 'The True

⁴¹ Teramura, pp.127-47.

⁴² McMullan, pp.121.

⁴³ The quarto edition of *Nobody and Somebody* is undated, but given its entry in the Stationers' Register in March 1606, it is likely the play reached the bookstalls later in the same year.

Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella', replacing its description in the Register as a 'Tragecall historie'.⁴⁴ Interestingly, *King Leir* was Wright's first dramatic publication, and the paratextual presentation of the play, which draws attention to its claims of historical veracity and its position as a 'chronicle' account, gestures towards the prominent authorizing position of legendary British history in the early Jacobean period. The descriptive term 'chronicle' was infrequently used on dramatic title pages, and it is striking that, at the same time as the reigns of early British monarchs were being invoked in non-dramatic accounts, a concentration of playbooks featuring legendary histories incorporated the phrase 'true chronicle history' as part of their titles. *King Leir* (1605), *Nobody and Somebody* (c.1606), and *King Lear* (1608) are all described in this way, suggesting their connection to Jacobean narratives of descent, succession, and legitimation, as well as to the range of publications that engaged with these histories upon James's accession. Of course, the title-page similarity between the anonymous *Leir* and Shakespeare's *Lear* is also a marketing strategy (on the part of the later edition) to highlight the connection between the two plays, while also advertising Shakespeare's authorship of the 1608 text (discussed later in this chapter).⁴⁵ The anonymous *Leir* is the first Jacobean playbook to be described as a 'true chronicle history', but, rather than presenting a celebratory originary account, the play concentrates on the dramatization of division, conflict, and foreign invasion. Significantly, *Leir* aligns himself with another legendary Trojan ancestor, Priam, whose history and death at the fall of Troy was seen as a foreshadow of future events.⁴⁶ With its publication in 1605, *King Leir* as a printed text suggests a refocused reading of the play that is alert to its new historical context, emerging in dialogue with recent Jacobean political narratives that featured

⁴⁴ *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* (STC 15343, 1605), A1r; Arber, III, p.289.

⁴⁵ For example, John Jowett suggests that 'the 1608 edition seems to go out of its way to confuse', as 'the core element of the title, "true chronicle history of King Lear and his three daughters," is [...] shared between the two different plays'. He also proposes that the 1608 edition's dependence on the title from *Leir* suggests that its manuscript did not provide a suitable title. See Jowett's edition of *King Lear* in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works: Critical Reference Edition, Volume 1*, ed. by Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.1234-36.

⁴⁶ For example, *Leir* offers the following comparison of himself and his state to Priam:

And think your selues as welcome to King Leir,
As euer Pryams children were to him.

[*King Leir*, B4v]

early British history more consistently and emphatically than accounts during the play's original Elizabethan performance.

The engagement of writers, theatrical companies, and publishers with early British history was not the only way in which the pressing Jacobean issues of union and monarchical power were explored. An interesting pattern that emerges in dramatic and non-dramatic texts from the first decade of James's reign is the dominance of legendary or ancient histories and those of the recent past, which further complicates attempts at defining the 'history play' or its typical temporal focus. Plays first printed during this period and concentrating on the recent past include *When You See Me You Know Me* (1605), *Captain Thomas Stukeley* (1605), *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1: 1605, and Part 2: 1606), *The Whore of Babylon* (1607), *Bussy D'Ambois* (1607), *The Devil's Charter* (1607), *The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt* (1607), and *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron* (1608). Many of these texts dramatize the reigns of Tudor monarchs or sixteenth- and seventeenth-century continental history, provoking Jacobean political applications through, for example, the allegorical defeat of the Spanish Armada in *The Whore of Babylon*, which was performed and published in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, or the shifting power struggles, alliances, and unions dramatized in *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, which culminated in the Battle of Three Kings and led to the incorporation of Portugal under the Spanish monarchy. Continental histories and current events provided a ready-made springboard for Jacobean commentary as, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, other nations and city states in Europe had undergone or were undergoing processes of unification and transfer of rule. As Hopkins argues, European history offered comparable models of twinned kingdoms: France and Navarre had recently been united under the reign of Henri IV, Portugal and Spain had been united following the Battle of Three Kings and the expulsion of Don Antonio by Philip II, Denmark and Norway were both ruled by Christian IV (brother to James's wife, Anne of Denmark), and the repeatedly united and divided kingdoms of Sicily and Naples had been

reunified in the sixteenth century.⁴⁷ In addition to legendary histories concerning ‘Britain’, Jacobean politics could look to recent continental unions, with the model of France and Navarre provoking the most commentary and drawing of parallels. Indeed, an interest in the ongoing tensions of Henri IV’s reign was prominent in London, and many stationers, including Nathaniel Butter, Matthew Law, and John Wright, published accounts of the events in France, which culminated in the assassination of Henri IV in 1610. As John Chamberlain reports, ‘Powles [i.e. Paul’s Churchyard] is so furnisht that yt affords whatsoever is stirring in Fraunce,’ drawing attention to the position of Paul’s Churchyard as the centre of the book trade and the reputation of the central aisle in the cathedral as a focal point for gathering and spreading the latest news.⁴⁸

When considering in more detail the performance and publication of history plays, as well as the theatrical companies involved, it comes to seem significant that, during the first decade of James’s reign, dramatic historical engagement was dominated by plays from the four royally patronized companies – the King’s Men, Queen Anne’s Men, Prince Henry’s Men, and the Children of the Queen’s Revels – and, in terms of publication patterns, reached a peak between 1605 and 1608, with an average of six play editions per year (see Appendix A). This publication peak, consisting of first and reprint editions, represents one of the greatest concentrations of professional historical drama from the time when the Theatre opened in 1576 to the closing of the theatres in 1642. By narrowly focusing on Shakespeare’s plays and so perceiving historical engagement as consisting largely of English medieval history, this interest in dramatizing the past and exploring its applications to contemporary politics has been regularly overlooked.

⁴⁷ Hopkins, p.17

⁴⁸ Letter from Chamberlain to Carleton (dated 11 February 1603) in McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, I, pp.183-84; Sabrina Baron, ‘The guises of dissemination in early seventeenth-century England’ in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.41-56, (p.50).

The four royal companies' historical focus suggests a way of engaging with their plays that is alert to the interpretative implications stemming from their associated patrons. Royal patronage conferred a degree of authorization on the companies' plays and practices, and, by extension, on the position of the theatres in general. For example, when Thomas Sutton's *England's Summons* was published in an expanded version in 1613, it contained an attack on the theatres, which ignited Nathan Field's counter-accusation that as the theatre is 'patronized by the King, it is disloyal to preach against it'.⁴⁹ Similarly, by means of a patronage association with the court, plays could be watched or read as implicitly aligning themselves with the interests of their royal patrons, regardless of the nature of their dramatizations, and companies and publishers by the first decade of the seventeenth century routinely capitalized on this elevating and associative function by drawing attention to company patrons on the title pages of printed playbooks. For example, Teresa Grant has argued that Rowley's *When You See Me You Know Me* (1605) represents a 'tributary play for [Prince] Henry' and that 'much of the play was deliberately angled towards the company's patron'.⁵⁰ This orientation is emphasized through the text's title page, which highlights the play's position within the repertory of Prince Henry's Men and describes its author as a 'seruant to the Prince', aligning both the company and dramatist with Prince Henry:

When you see me, | You know me. | Or the famous Chronicle Historie | of
king Henry the eight, with the | birth and vertuous life of Edward | Prince of
Wales. | As it was played by the high and mightie Prince | of Wales his
seruants. | By Samuell Rowley, seruant | to the Prince.⁵¹

The title-page description also suggests a parallel between Prince Henry and Edward VI through the repetition of 'Prince of Wales' in the description of both individuals. Significantly, Prince Henry was not actually invested as Prince of Wales until June 1610, although the heir apparent had been successively appointed this title since the future Edward II in 1301. The title page's claim to have been performed by the 'Prince of Wales his seruants'

⁴⁹ *Englands Summons* (STC 23500, 1613), C6r-7r; *CSP Domestic*, IX, p.419.

⁵⁰ Grant, 'History', pp.132, 145.

⁵¹ *When you see me, You know me* (STC 21417, 1605), A1r. Further references are given after quotations.

assigns Henry a title that he did not yet have, but one that insists upon an interpretative link between the two princes.⁵²

Exploring this connection in more detail, the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553), who appears as Prince Edward in the play, was marked by the pursuit of a more active Protestant agenda, in contrast to the practices of his father, Henry VIII. Following his early death in 1553 at the age of fifteen, Edward was repeatedly invoked in reformist accounts as an incipient hero of Protestantism. Prince Henry started to be similarly fashioned, and his court attracted noblemen with militant Protestant agendas who looked to him to undertake a parallel stance to Edward VI, especially in light of their dissatisfaction with the furtherance of reformist practices under the new monarchy and James's policy of religious toleration. The play, which describes Prince Edward as the 'hope that England hath' (H2r), together with its position within the repertory of Prince Henry's Men, brings about an interpretative association between the company's royal patron and a Protestant agenda.⁵³ As Grant suggests, the play marks 'the first attempt [of Prince Henry's Men] to negotiate their patron's image', and this process is further outlined by the paratexts on the printed title page.⁵⁴ As can be seen, royal patronage (and its advertising) could serve to boost theatrical and publication revenue, act as an authorizing strategy, and promote a particular reading of a play in light of a suggestive link between text and patron. Indeed, these interconnections serve to collapse a clear distinction between aristocratic or royal patronage and commercial motivations, a condition of production

⁵² Cf. Grant, 'History', pp.132; Spikes, pp.127-30.

⁵³ Prince Edward is presented throughout the play as an incipient reformist, questioning Catholic beliefs, including the existence of purgatory:

God giue ye truth that you may giue it me,
This Land ye know stands wauering in her Faith,
Betwixt the Papists and the Protestants,
You know we all must die, and this flesh
Part, with her part of immortalitie,
Tutor, I doe beleeeue both Heauen and Hell:
Doe you know any third place for the soules abode
Cald'd Purgatorie, as some would haue me thinke.

[G3v]

⁵⁴ Grant, 'History', p.132.

that is also apparent in Thomas Creede's and Andrew Wise's publishing practices (discussed in Chapter 1 and 2).

While the use of recent and ancient histories in professional plays could promote interpretations in line with the politics of their nominal patrons, this connection did not turn dramatizations of the past into uncomplicated platforms for royal views. As Knutson has argued, repertory companies were predominantly commercial ventures that relied on their public audiences for income and survival, and did not necessarily adopt the political views of their patrons – although drawing attention to the cachet of their royal patrons could be an effective marketing strategy that had the potential for suggesting certain parallels.⁵⁵ Indeed, instances of censorship and controversy surrounding the companies' historical representations indicate their operational autonomy, as suggested by the lost play 'Gowrie', which may have been suppressed following its initial performance by the King's Men in 1604.⁵⁶ The play probably dramatized the attempted assassination of James VI (as king of Scotland) in 1600 by John Ruthven, third earl of Gowrie, sparking the objection of certain councillors at James's court, as described by John Chamberlain in his letter to Ralph Winwood on 18 December 1604:

[T]he tragedie of Gowrie with all the action and actors hath ben twice represented by the Kings players, with exceding concourse of all sortes of people, but whether the matter or manner be not well handled, or that yt be thought unfit that princes should be plaide on the stage in theyre life time, I heare that some great counsaillors are much displeased with yt: and so is thought shalbe forbidden.⁵⁷

While there is no evidence to confirm the play's performance was banned, its dramatization of a recent assassination attempt on the life of the current monarch was clearly considered objectionable by some at James's court, especially as it would have featured an actor impersonating the king, as Chamberlain suggests. In this way, accounts of play censorship

⁵⁵ Knutson, *Playing Companies*, ch.1-2.

⁵⁶ 'Gowrie', *LPD*.

⁵⁷ McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, I, p.199.

and controversy, together with the commercial practices of theatrical ventures, reveal the operational independence of repertory companies and the range of interpretations generated by their plays, with different producers, audiences, and readers engaging with historical dramatizations in varying and indeterminable ways.⁵⁸

Despite being seen by some critics as marking the decline of the history play, the early Jacobean period witnessed a profusion of historical engagement on the stage and in print, and an important connection can be identified between patterns in dramatic and non-dramatic publications, especially as they relate to contemporary Jacobean politics. History plays, whether or not they were printed, did not only draw on traditions inherited from the stage and oral culture. As a comparison of dramatic and non-dramatic publications demonstrates, history plays were very much in dialogue with other printed texts, pamphlets, and news accounts, including the legitimizing narratives of the Stuart regime. These connections influenced patterns in dramatic historical engagement in the early Jacobean period. During this time, history plays focused predominantly on ancient or legendary history and the recent past, an emphasis which can be further explored through the publications of the stationers at St Austin's Gate.

‘True Paules bred, | I’ the Church-yard’: Patrons and historical writing at St Austin’s Gate⁵⁹

Between 1605 and 1609, a significant concentration of history plays from the three royally patronized adult companies reached print in first and reprinted editions, many of which advertised their company connections on the playbook title pages. Two stationers occupied central positions in their publication: Matthew Law was responsible for reprinted editions of

⁵⁸ This interpretative fluidity can also be detected in plays that are closely linked to an image of their company patrons, as in *When You See Me You Know Me*. Grant argues that ‘what [this] play shows more than anything else are the benefits of Tacitean method: comparative examples can be criticism, warning, worry, exhortation or praise.’ ‘History’, p.149.

⁵⁹ From Ben Jonson’s *The Staple of News* (STC 14753.5, 1631), Bb1v. Further references will be given after quotations.

Shakespeare's English history plays (the rights for which he had inherited from Andrew Wise in 1603), namely, *Richard II* (Q4 1608), *Richard III* (Q4 1605), and *I Henry IV* (Q3 1604, Q4 1608), whereas Nathaniel Butter almost exclusively invested in first editions of plays written after James's accession, including *When You See Me You Know Me* (Q1 1605), *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1: Q1 1605, Q2 1606, Q3 1608; Part 2: Q1 1606, Q2 1609), *The Trial of Chivalry* (Q1 1605), *The Whore of Babylon* (Q1 1607), *King Lear* (Q1 1608), and *The Rape of Lucrece* (Q1 1608, Q2 1609), publishing reprints of those titles which proved successful with readers. This publication division along the lines of first and subsequent editions demonstrates that the stationers' methods of acquiring commercial plays differed, Butter's investments suggesting more direct contact with theatrical companies and dramatists, and Law's practices only involving members of the Stationers' Company who had previously acquired the dramatic manuscripts. However, parallels between these historical dramas, as well as Butter's and Law's wider publication outputs, suggest the plays interacted with each other as concurrently produced material texts, especially as they were offered for wholesale from the same London location – at St Austin's Gate in Paul's Churchyard (see Figure 2). This small area of St Paul's contained few stationers' bookshops and, between 1605 and 1629, only Law and Butter, the two individuals most involved in the publication and sale of history plays in the first decade of the seventeenth century, operated out of this location. As discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to Shakespearian wholesale, this geographical concentration of stationers dealing with history plays in the early Jacobean period raises the possibility that specific areas of St Paul's (and the London book trade more widely) could become associated with particular stationers and types of publication, an important consideration when looking at text survival and evidence for local readings.

Indeed, from the arrival of Law at the Sign of the Fox in 1601 and Butter at the Sign of the Pied Bull in 1605, the publishing strategies of the two stationers shared some striking correspondences, although they were to diverge as their joint occupancy of the area around St Austin's Gate continued throughout the 1610s and 1620s. Aside from history plays, both

Butter and Law specialized in shorter publications featuring discussions of recent events, treatises, conferences, military conflicts, and the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, as well as religious texts from writers such as Joseph Hall (published by Butter) and William Barlow (published by Law), who worked directly for James I. An emphasis on recent or historical accounts connected to the political concerns of the early Jacobean period, especially issues of union, the position of Catholicism in England, the interaction of religion and politics, and the events and aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, characterizes the publishing output of Butter and Law, as well as the wholesale patterns of this part of Paul's Churchyard. In this section, the historical and political priorities and patronage connections of the stationers at St Austin's Gate will be examined as evidence for localized readings of dramatic and non-dramatic historical texts. This section will concentrate particularly on Butter's output and agency in selecting and positioning texts that focused on pressing issues of Jacobean politics, religion, and historiography.

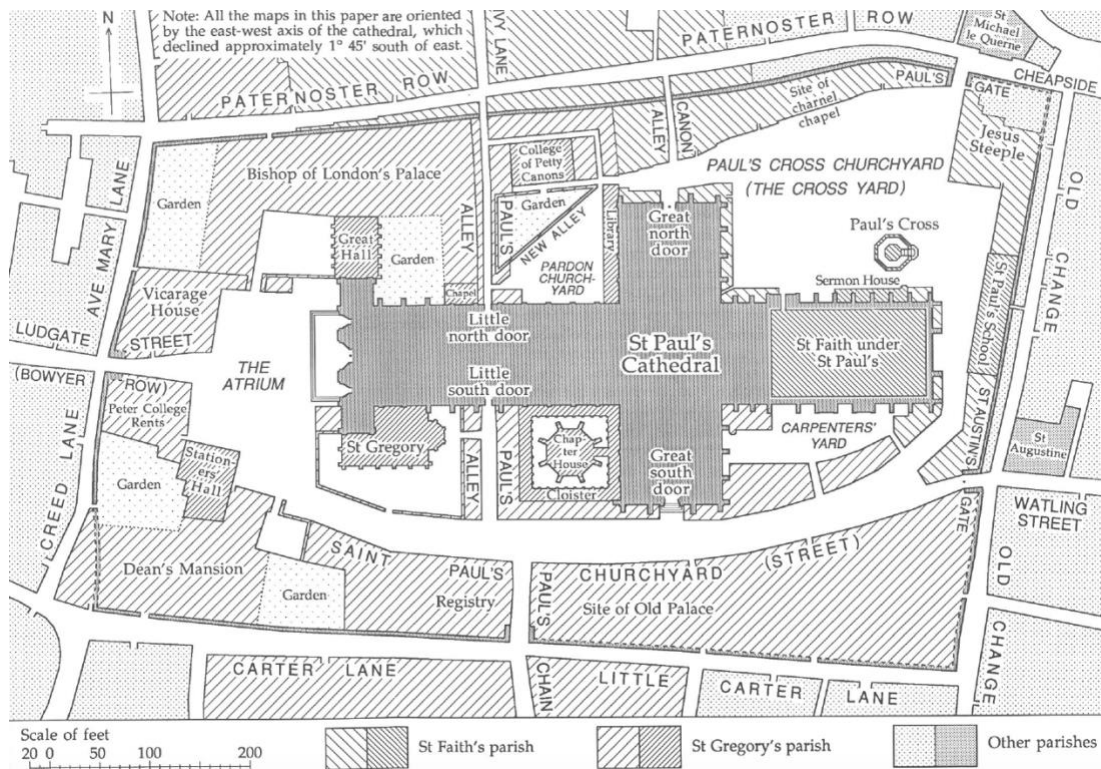


Figure 4: St Paul's Churchyard, © Peter W. M. Blayney

Critical interest in Nathaniel Butter has largely been confined to his involvement in the first quarto edition of *King Lear* in 1608, in addition to his publication of news accounts during the 1620s and 1630s, a role which afforded him a considerable degree of notoriety during the period and led to his satirical representation in several publications, including Jonson's *The Staple of News*. Leona Rostenberg describes Butter and Nicholas Bourne (a stationer with whom Butter worked in collaboration from 1622 onwards) as the first 'Masters of the Staple', arguing that 'their signal contribution was the establishment of the modern Press, and in the history of English journalism they rank as the first newsmen to the people'.⁶⁰ Together Butter and Bourne produced weekly accounts of news during the 1620s and 1630s, mostly concentrating on the conflicts of the Thirty Years' War. Butter seems to have been the public face of the enterprise, as suggested by Jonson's *Staple of News* in which Butter is featured as the 'decay'd Stationer [...] true Paules bred, | I'the Church-yard' (Bb1v). As Rostenberg observes, the news that emerged from Butter's shop at the Pied Bull formed 'a vivid and detailed portrait of early seventeenth-century England and her continental cousins'.⁶¹

The roots of Butter's later specialism in weekly news accounts and serials can be detected in his earlier career. Between 1602 and 1622, Butter published about two hundred books, 'of which 41 per cent may be regarded as news-tracts', and his prominent role in the publication of history plays between 1605 and 1609 (especially those dealing with the relatively recent past) perhaps foreshadows his later and more exclusive focus on news books and pamphlets.⁶² As Jonson's characters Cymbal and Fitton discuss, Butter may be a 'decay'd Stationer' but he 'knowes Newes well, can sort and ranke 'hem [...] And for a need can make 'hem' (Bb1v), which indicates a proclivity to shape and manufacture (both materially and creatively) accounts of current events. Butter's interest in contemporary politics suggests a way of

⁶⁰ 'Nathaniel Butter and Nicholas Bourne, First "Masters of the Staple"', in *Library*, s5-XII:1 (1957), 23-33 (p.23).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.25.

⁶² *Ibid.*

reading his published history plays and interpreting his strategies of play selection and presentation, as will be explored throughout this section.

Butter's publication of Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1608), Heywood's *I and 2 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (1605, 1606) and John Davies of Hereford's *Bien Venu* (1606) demonstrates that he invested in texts that related to pressing Jacobean political concerns, most centrally, the union of England and Scotland, which provides a possible interpretative framework for these publications. The opening lines of *King Lear* launch readers into the midst of a political debate and immediately introduce the issue of kingdom division in relation to Lear's plan to allocate each of his daughters a section of Britain:

Kent: I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany then Cornwell.

Glost: It did all waies seeme so to vs, but now in the diuision of the kingdomes, it appeares not which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities are so weighed, that curiositie in neither, can make choise of eithers moytie.⁶³

The play's audiences and readers would probably recognize the connection between this rhetoric of division in the context of the legendary British monarch Leir (who supposedly ruled in the eighth century BC) and the use of similar narratives of 'British' unity and division that were prominent in James's genealogies and project for the union of England and Scotland. Indeed, the references to the dukes of Albany and Cornwall in the play's opening lines recall James's court, as these titles had been assigned to his two heirs: Prince Charles was created duke of Albany (which was associated with Scotland) at his baptism in 1600, and Prince Henry was created duke of Cornwall in 1603. At the time of the play's first performance and publication, there were only three dukedoms in Britain – Albany, Cornwall, and York – and all three were held by the two princes, following Prince Charles's investiture as duke of York in 1605. Through the prominence of these titles, the play highlights questions of *Jacobean*

⁶³ *True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King Lear* (STC 22292, 1608), B1r. Further references will be given after quotations.

succession, and, in Butter's 1608 edition of *King Lear*, Albany is given the play's final lines, which the Folio text assigns to Edgar:

The waight of this sad time we must obey,
 Speake what we feele, not what we ought to say,
 The oldest haue borne most, we that are yong,
 Shall neuer see so much, nor liue so long. [L4r]

While it is outside the purposes of this study to engage with the provenance of Q1, the allocation of these lines to Albany in the quarto text firmly situates the play within contemporary union debates, and this ending could be seen as gesturing towards the inheritance of the 'reunited' kingdom by an individual with Scottish ties, thus prefiguring James and his sons. However, the conclusion is far from reassuring, and Shakespeare's departure from the historical narrative (as recounted in Holinshed, his main chronicle source) would have been apparent to Jacobean audiences and readers, not solely because of its unexpected tragic ending (the aspect most often focused on by critical accounts), but also for its effective negation of James's genealogy. In the source material and Galfridian tradition, neither Albany nor Edgar inherit the kingdom, and the monarchical line continues through Cordeilla, and her nephews Cunedagius and Marganus. Shakespeare's rewriting of this history allies James's attempts at promoting an illustrious line of descent with the language of negation and division that inheres throughout the play, disrupting the traditional narrative of succession that was central in Jacobean mythologizing.

The play also draws attention to the destabilizing parallels between the destructive consequences of Lear's reign and the traditions associated with Brutus, the legendary monarch on whom James relied for aggrandizing his lineage and monarchical authority.⁶⁴ Central amongst these connections, both Brute and Leir ruled over a united Britain and then divided their kingdoms between three heirs (Brute's sons Locrine, Albanact, and Camber, and Leir's daughters Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla), each division having disastrous consequences and

⁶⁴ In this section, the spelling 'Leir' is used in reference to the legendary monarch, whereas 'Lear' refers to Shakespeare's character and treatment of the material.

leading to disorder and civil war. As Richard Dutton has shown, Shakespeare's play heightens the connections between the Brute and Leir narratives, suggesting parallels between James's idealized monarchy and the disintegration marked by Lear's reign.⁶⁵ Gloucester's leap from the cliffs at Dover would perhaps have evoked recollections of the giant Gogmagog's leap at Dover, which is part of the Brute narrative (the widespread recognition of which is suggested by its casual use in Munday's mayoral pageant, *The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia*, 1605).⁶⁶ Moreover, the three characters of Kent, Cornwall, and Albany suggest, through the geographical locations indicated by their titles, the three 'corners' of Britain created by Brute's division of the kingdom. While James invoked Brute's rule as a return to the conditions of an ideal union, Brute's narrative could equally be taken as the point of departure for ensuing division, conflict, and abrupt changes in monarchic rule, far from the model of *translatio imperii*, and one that continued to be mirrored in the reigns of later kings, including Leir. By 1607, it was becoming clear that James's union project had failed: it had encountered opposition during James's first Parliament (1604-1611), especially during the third session between November 1606 and July 1607, which had challenged the king's royal prerogative and compromised the mythologizing potential of his originary narratives.⁶⁷ Butter's 1608 publication of *King Lear* encourages an identification with Jacobean politics and efforts at historical appropriation, and posits a counter-narrative of disunity and division stemming from these similar storylines and sources that was perhaps even more relevant in 1608 than during the play's first performances (in c.1605-1606).

That discussions of union and division were increasingly associated, especially within Butter's bookshop, with the debate surrounding the union of England and Scotland is suggested by other publications that clearly recall James's project, while purporting to discuss or dramatize

⁶⁵ 'King Lear, *The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia* and "The Matter of Britain"', *Literature and History*, 12:2 (1986), 139-51 (pp.141-43).

⁶⁶ *The Trivmphes of re-vnited Britania* (STC 18279, 1605), A3r, B1r-B2r.

⁶⁷ Roger Lockyer, *The Early Stuarts: A Political History of England, 1603-1642*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1999), pp.103-12.

other matters. John Davies's *Bien Venu*, published by Butter in 1606, is superficially a celebration of King Christian IV of Denmark's visit to England in July 1606 and the meeting of the two monarchs; however, the language and references used throughout are more strongly suggestive of England and Scotland's union:

O VNION! that enclaspest in thyne armes,
 All that in Heau'n and Earth is great, or good,
 (Thou Heau'nly Harbour from all earthly harmes)
 Thou Damm, that straist the Streames of humane bloud)
 What humane Heart but (maugre Hatreds Charms)
 Will not desire thee, as the Angells food?
 Sith through thy powr thou makst mans powr so strong
 As not to offer, much lesse suffer wrong.⁶⁸

While Davies's ottava rima poem claims to memorialize the 'union' of the two kings, effected through Queen Anne (who was Christian IV's sister), its suggestion that 'Great Britaines Denmarke, Denmarkes Britaine is, | By transmigration one int' other gon' is clearly intended to evoke the connection between England and Scotland and their conjunction under James's rule.⁶⁹ The importance of the union (purportedly Britain and Denmark's, but more pointedly, England and Scotland's) is emphasized through its description as a 'Heau'nly Harbour' that provides shelter from 'all earthly harmes'. Davies's poem emphatically and consistently appropriates the rhetoric of Jacobean political propaganda, and indeed, Davies, a poet and writing master, had connections to the Jacobean court. He worked as a handwriting instructor for Prince Henry, as well as noble families, including the Percys, the Herberts, and the Pembrokes, a connection that may have informed his treatment of the royal visit and its clear application to the union of England and Scotland.⁷⁰

Butter's publication of *Bien Venu*, which was entered in the Stationers' Register on 29 July 1606 and reached the bookstalls in the immediate aftermath of the royal visit, capitalizes on the newsworthy quality of the text's purported content, while also fitting in with Butter's wider

⁶⁸ *Bien Venu* (STC 6329, 1606), A4r.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, B2v.

⁷⁰ P.J. Finkelpearl, 'Davies, John (1564/5-1618)', *ODNB*, para.2.

wholesale offerings. Indeed, when considering Butter's involvement and the ways in which his publications often feature and refocus Jacobean political issues (as in *King Lear*), an alternative localized reading of *Bien Venu* can be proposed that is less optimistic about the union project. The poem's publication and its evocation of union parallels with England and Scotland three years into the reign of James I and the unsuccessful union debates perhaps undermines its enthusiastic promotion of the project under the thinly veiled guise of the recent monarchical visit. While Davies may be utilizing James's historiographical and rhetorical strategies, Butter's role as the publisher and the interpretative context afforded by the dominant characteristics of his wider output encourages a synchronic reading of the text that is more equivocal on the issue of union.

This conflicting view on union debates and the pressing political issues of the early Jacobean period characterizes Butter's other publications, such as Heywood's two-part *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, Part 1 (1605) becoming one of Butter's most successful playbooks, judging by the regularity of reprinted editions.⁷¹ The plays dramatize the life of Elizabeth I and imply a connection with several of Butter's other dramatic publications that concentrate on the lives of recent Tudor monarchs, including Rowley's *When You See Me You Know Me* in 1605 (which features Henry VIII) and Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon* in 1607 (which involves an allegorical presentation of Elizabeth I and the defeat of the Spanish Armada). Judith Spikes has suggested that such a grouping forms a specific theatrical subgenre that she calls the Jacobean 'Elect Nation' history play, and which promoted England/Britain as the predestined combatants and eventual victors against the followers of the Antichrist (that is, the Roman Catholic Church).⁷² Indeed, these plays draw significantly on John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, first published in 1563 and reprinted with considerable additions in 1570, which positions historical events and individuals within an apocalyptic narrative of Protestant

⁷¹ Butter published Part 1 in 1605 (Q1), 1606 (Q2), 1608 (Q3), 1613 (Q5), 1623 (Q6), 1632 (Q7), and 1639 (Q8), and Part 2 in 1606 (Q1), 1609 (Q2), 1623 (Q3), and 1633 (Q4), making these plays among his most reprinted texts.

⁷² Spikes, pp.117-49.

persecution under the tyranny of Catholicism, aligning religious conflict with incipient nationalism in a scriptural-historical context.

However, in describing this grouping, Spikes does not draw attention to the consistent involvement of Butter as the publisher. The focus and rhetoric of these plays are closely connected to Butter's other publications featuring ancient or legendary history and prioritizing Jacobean union debates. The publication of *I If You Know Not Me* in 1605, for example, suggests a reading that both celebrates and problematizes the Jacobean union project, as is characteristic of Butter's other texts. The play dramatizes Princess Elizabeth's difficulties, including her imprisonment, under the rule of her sister, Mary I, and Mary's husband, Philip II of Spain, and was probably written and first performed in the aftermath of the Treaty of London (1604), which established peace with Spain, but disappointed many militant Protestants.⁷³ Given the prevalence of anti-Spanish sentiment in commercial plays throughout the 1590s, the presentation of Philip in the play is surprisingly positive and the source of hostility is located in the frequently-vilified Bishop of Winchester and Mary herself. In the context of the recently-established peace with Spain, Heywood's repositioning is perhaps tactical, especially as foreign ambassadors had previously complained about theatrical representations on the English stages, and virulently anti-Spanish texts seem to have been either restrained, or to have appeared inadvisable to publishers during the early years of James's reign.⁷⁴ As Stilma argues, 'Heywood is required to be diplomatic' and his play 'demonstrates the complications of writing political drama at a time when the political situation was shifting and old enemies were no longer to be demonized'.⁷⁵

⁷³ Stilma, p.19.

⁷⁴ For example, Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, an anti-Habsburg play, had been published five times during the Elizabethan period (between 1592 and 1603); however, no further editions appeared after 1604 and the signing of the Treaty of London, and it was not until 1610, with the assassination of Henry IV of France and a resurgence in anti-Spanish feeling, that another edition was published, precipitating additional reprints in 1615, 1618, 1623, and 1633. Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), pp.22-24.

⁷⁵ Stilma, p.23. Cf. Teresa Grant, 'Drama Queen: Staging Elizabeth in *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*' in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. by Susan Doran and Thomas Freeman (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp.120-42 (pp.130-33).

This reemphasis, however, also suggests an ambiguous engagement with the issue of twinned kingdoms, and has immediate topical applications. The ceremonial presentation of Philip and Mary, including Philip's desire to proclaim their 'new vnited Stile', encourages an identification with James's project in a way that could be seen as straightforwardly celebratory, marking the reconciliation of two nations that had frequently been in conflict (as was also the case with England and Scotland in the early seventeenth century):

Phil: Now Spaine and England two populous Kingdomes,
That haue a long time been oppos'd
In Hostile emulation, shalbe at one:
This shalbe Spanish England, ours English Spaine.

Quee: Harke the redoubling ecchoes of the people,
How it proclaymes their loues; and welcome to this Vnion.⁷⁶

The uniting of Spain and England under the two monarchs 'to the redoubling echoes of the people' presents another model of twinned nations, but at the same time suggests an undercurrent of anxiety, owing to the swiftness with which the historical union was dissolved. Similarly, following the ceremonial entrance of the two monarchs, a lengthy declaration of the lands ruled by Philip and Mary is presented in the printed text, appearing to aggrandize English/British expansionist aims, and consolidate the power of the conjoined monarchy. The typography and *mise en page* draw attention to this section of the playbook, which is presented in large type, centred in the middle of the page, and introduced by an even larger and italicized stage direction, '*Sussex reades*':

Philip and Mary, by the grace of God, King and Queene of England, Spayne,
France and Ireland, King and Queene of Naples, Sciscillia, Leon and Aragon,
Arch-Duke and Dutches of Allria, Burgondy, of Brabant Zeland, of Holand:
Prince and Princesse of Sweaue, Count and Countesse of Hasburdge,
Maljorca, Sardinia, of the finne Land, and the maine Ocean Sea, Palatins of
Ierusalem, of Henolt; Lord and Ladie of Freeseland, and of the Isles: And
Gouernor and Gouvernesse of all Africa, and Asia. [B3r]

The pronouncement is distinguished from the main play, indicating its position as a 'read' text, drawing attention to its rather incongruous and undramatic quality, and perhaps

⁷⁶ Thomas Heywood, *If you know not me, you know no bodie* (STC 13328, 1605), B3r. Further references will be given after quotations.

suggesting that it was brought to the printing house as a separate document and was reassembled there, as Stern has argued in relation to prologues, epilogues, songs, and other separable components of a play.⁷⁷ A parallel can be identified with ‘The Kings pardon’ in *Jack Straw* (1594; see pp.73-74) and the ‘orations’ of Richard and Richmond in *Richard III* (1597; see p.136), both of which are rather undramatic, can easily be separated from the immediate action, and help to position the plays as texts to be read.⁷⁸ Made more apparent by its distinct printed presentation, the long declaration from *If You Know Not Me* asserts a hyperbolic monarchical claim to most of continental Europe, as well as Africa and Asia. Theatregoers and readers in the early seventeenth century would have been intensely aware of the short-lived alliance between Philip and Mary (and by synecdochic extension, Spain and England), which ended with her death in 1558, and is anticipated in the play by the quarrel between two minor characters, an Englishman and a Spaniard (E1v). The Englishman is eventually slain, and this short scene effectively foreshadows future discord and division. The lengthy list of dominions in the printed text emerges, therefore, as a monarchical fantasy, resonating with the propaganda surrounding James’s union project, and the rehearsed genealogies that outlined his claims to England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and France.

While none of Butter’s first-edition playbooks contain dedicatory epistles, most of his non-dramatic publications are dedicated to aristocratic patrons, usually signed by the writer of the text. When considering the interdependence of Butter’s dramatic and non-dramatic works within the context of Jacobean union between 1605 and 1609, one particular dedicatee emerges as significant, which offers another interpretative context for these publications. In the first decade of the seventeenth century, several of Butter’s texts contain dedications to Philip Herbert, first earl of Montgomery and brother of William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke, both of whom were to become the dedicatees of Shakespeare’s First Folio in 1623. At the time of James I’s accession, Philip Herbert was a young man in the new king’s court,

⁷⁷ Stern, *Documents*, especially chapters 4 and 5.

⁷⁸ Cf. Jowett in *Richard III*, pp.384-85.

quickly acquiring a range of honours and appointments, including gentleman of the privy chamber (May 1603), knight of the Bath (23 July 1603), gentlemen of the bedchamber (1605), and Baron Herbert of Shurland, and first earl of Montgomery (4 May 1605).⁷⁹ According to Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, Philip quickly attracted James's favour and was 'the first who drew the King's eyes towards him with affection', owing to 'the comeliness of his person' and his 'indefatigable industry in hunting'.⁸⁰ During this time, Philip also started to attract his first dedications in print and manuscript. Although his brother, William, was to emerge as the more significant literary patron, described by John Aubrey as the 'greatest Maecenas to learned Men of any Peer of his time; or since', both brothers were associated with the Sidney/Pembroke literary coterie, as their mother was Mary Sidney (sister to Philip Sidney).⁸¹ Philip was named after his famous uncle, and this connection is highlighted in several texts, including the manuscript of John Reynold's prose romance, *Love's Laurel Garland* (1605), and William Herbert's *Prophecy of Cadwallader* (1604), in which the dedication describes Philip as 'That man of men whose fatall name you beare, S.P.S.'⁸² Philip was also the dedicatee of several of Butter's early publications, including Davies's *Bien Venu* (1606), John Hind's *Eliosto Libidinoso* (1606), and Anthony Nixon's *Wars of Swethland* (1609), which was probably the source for a lost play by Dekker called 'Gustavus, King of Swethland'.⁸³ While there is little evidence to indicate a direct patronage link between Butter and Philip Herbert, the concentration of dedications that coincide with Philip's rise to favour at the Jacobean court suggests a strategic attempt to associate texts with a prominent aristocrat, who could serve an authorizing and promotional function.

⁷⁹ David L. Smith, 'Herbert, Philip, first earl of Montgomery and fourth earl of Pembroke (1584-1650)', *ODNB*, para.2.

⁸⁰ David Smith, para.2.

⁸¹ Michael Brennan, *Literary Patronage in the English Renaissance: The Pembroke Family* (London: Routledge, 1988), p.150.

⁸² BL Add. MS 34782 (John Reynolds, *Love's Laurell Garland*, 1605); William Herbert, *A Prophecie of Cadwallader, last King of the Britaines* (STC 12752, 1604), A3r. Not to be confused with William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke (who was his second cousin once removed), Herbert (1583?-1628) was a poet and adventurer whose two major works were both mythical-historical poems.

⁸³ Wiggins, *Catalogue*, VI, p.42.

The dedicatory epistle in *Bien Venu* aligns Philip with a text that offers an extensive commentary on the union of England and Scotland, an emphasis which is similarly reflected in Nixon's *Wars of Swethland*. Nixon had a regular association with Butter between 1608 and 1610, and his *Wars of Swethland* offers an account of recent conflicts between 'Sigismond, King of Poland' and 'Duke Charles, his Vncle, lately Crowned King of Swethland' (or Sweden), providing another example of the twinned kingdom debate that encouraged interpretative links with England and Scotland.⁸⁴ Nixon describes his text as a 'little Treatise that concerns the designes of two Kingdoms', which he has dedicated to Philip Herbert whose 'Experience is already knowne to be sufficiently instructed in the affaires of our owne Countrey', highlighting the text's presentation of a continental model of two nations that resonated with the government of a 'united' Britain and positioned Herbert within this negotiation.⁸⁵

Indeed, twinned-nation models recur in other texts and plays of the period, providing a context for both emulation and warning. The recent unions of Spain and Portugal, and France and Navarre, for example, were topics of interest and discussion in Jacobean England, and provided possible models for England and Scotland. However, these continental parallels were also associated with political anxieties and the threat of further conflict and dissolution. The incorporation of Portugal within the Spanish monarchy in the aftermath of the Battle of Three Kings (1578) was a significant concern for English trade and political interests, as it consolidated Spanish control of the Iberian Peninsula; these events were featured in several publications, including the anonymous play, *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, in 1605. Similarly, the rule of Henri IV in France united the previously conflicting kingdoms of France and Navarre, but this incorporation did not dissipate tensions or quell the threat of disruption, and led instead to Henri's assassination in 1610. During the first decade of the seventeenth century, the structural framework of two kingdoms or states in the process of unification,

⁸⁴ *The Warres of Swethland* (STC 18594, 1609), A1r.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, A2r-v.

dissolution, or conflict repeatedly evoked several major continental powers, in addition to England and Scotland, and was becoming an increasingly prominent feature in both dramatic and non-dramatic texts.

The selection of Philip Herbert as the dedicatee of Butter's texts that involved twinned kingdoms is also perpetuated by other stationers during this period, which suggests that the use of Philip's name carried more extensive and significant implications, and that it was not merely the arbitrary selection of a young aristocrat who was quickly gathering favour with the king. It is possible that stationers and writers associated the Herberts (heirs to the earldom of Pembroke) more intrinsically with the politics and geography of union. As Hopkins discusses, 'Pembrokeshire was also famously divided in linguistic terms, with communities on one side of what was known as the Landscar or Landsker having English as a first language and those on the other speaking Welsh', drawing attention to the position of Wales (the often-overlooked nation within accounts of English and Scottish union) as 'both geographically marginal to and yet at the same time mythically central to seventeenth-century Britons' troubled and conflicted idea of "Britain"'.⁸⁶ Indeed, William Camden's *Britannia*, first published in 1586, but issued in its sixth edition in 1607, describes Pembrokeshire as '*Anglia Transwallina*', and contains the printed marginal gloss, 'Little England beyond Wales', the first recorded usage of this phrase, which had a heightened topicality in the context of early Jacobean union debates.⁸⁷ Camden's text was printed by John Norton and offered for wholesale at the south-east corner of Paul's Cross (see Norton's shop in Figure 1), its first Jacobean edition emerging in close geographical and thematic proximity to the discourses concerning union and twinned nations that were published by Butter at the nearby St Austin's Gate.

⁸⁶ Hopkins, pp.117-18.

⁸⁷ *Britannia siue Florentissimorum regnorum Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae, et insularum adiacentium ex intima antiquitate chorographica descriptio* (STC 4503, 1586), Bb3r.

Therefore, as a potential literary patron, Philip Herbert, who was associated with Pembrokeshire through his family's hereditary seat and would later become the fourth earl of Pembroke on the death of his brother, William, in 1630, could be linked to the geographical and mythological significance surrounding another set of twinned nations, England and Wales. These nations provided not only a parallel union application but were also central within James's own genealogical narrative, which outlined his successional rights to Wales and his lineal position within that country's historical traditions. In fact, one of the first texts dedicated to Philip Herbert, *A Prophecy of Cadwallader, last King of the Britains* (1604), comprises of a comparative account of English kings and Roman leaders within the context of a prophecy from Cadwallader who was the last Welsh king to rule over a united Britain. This text was written by William Herbert (1583?-1628), who was distantly related to the Herbert brothers; the selection of Philip as dedicatee of a long poem that offers a celebratory genealogy of James I through the prophecy of a Welsh king of Britain points to Philip's position (and those of the earls of Pembroke) within the debates and myths of union, especially in connection to Wales.

Returning to Butter and his interest in pursuing a patronage link with Philip Herbert, it is significant that Butter's first entry in the Stationers' Register (on 4 December 1604) was for *The Trial of Chivalry* (given as 'The life and Deathe of Cavaliero Dick Boyer'), a play which uses Sidney's *Arcadia* as its source and presents a conflict between the two nations of France and Navarre that is eventually resolved through inter-dynastic marriages.⁸⁸ The play, moreover, features a prominent role for an earl of Pembroke, presented as an ally of Navarre. This fictionalized pseudo-history brings together the characteristic elements of Butter's publications – twinned nations, *translatio imperii*, and a connection to Philip Herbert (through the family title) – and seems to suggest an awareness of Herbert as a potential auditor and patron, especially through the patriotic and heroic role Pembroke is assigned throughout the

⁸⁸ Arber, III, p.277.

play, offering council to Navarre (as in the following extract) and promoting the union of the two nations:

The French and English make one warlike body,
Whereof your Highnesse is the mouing head:
Or peace, or warre, as pleaseth you direct.
[...]
Talke not of yeres, yeres limit not a Crowne,
There's no prescriptions to inthrall a King:
He finds it written in the Rowles of time,
Nauar's a Kingdome solely absolute,
And by collusion of the Kings of France,
Because it lies so fitly vpon France,
The people speaking all one mother tounge,
It hath bin wrestled for a Royalty,
Vntruly due vnto the Crowne of France.
That Pembroke speaks the truth, behold my sword,
Which shall approue my words substantiall.⁸⁹

Pembroke's speech recalls Jacobean political concerns, paradigms, and rhetoric. The model of kingship invoked is one of absolute authority and obedience to the monarch, where 'there's no prescriptions to inthrall a King'. Navarre's claim to France (providing a potential parallel for James's claim to England) is supported by the shared language of the two nations, and Pembroke concludes that Navarre (both king and kingdom) has been 'wrestled for a Royalty' that should not be held by France. Moreover, while Pembroke is presented as a heroic warrior, whose 'tounge [is] tunde to the Instruments of war' (B1v), he is also an advocate for peace, arguing that heaven provides for peace 'euen in the iaws of war' (A3r) and that France and Navarre must agree as 'force cannot end this war, but policy' (I2r), which parallels James's presentation as *rex pacificus*. Thus, in the play, Pembroke and Pembrookeshire evoke an association both with James's attempts at self-fashioning, and with the Herberts and their geographical and aristocratic connections to a liminal nation around which mythologizing narratives collected as part of a project of redefining the union of two larger nations, England and Scotland.

⁸⁹ Anon., *The History of the tryall of Cheualry* (STC 13527, 1605), A2r-v. Further references will be given after quotations.

These associations are further enforced through Pembroke's intermediary role between France and Navarre in the play. Indeed, the appearance of a character linked with Pembrokeshire in a pseudo-history concerning the assertion of sovereignty by the king of Navarre is a striking, unhistorical, and unprecedented juxtaposition that seems to insist upon a connection between the two nations of France and Navarre and the state of the British nations within the context of Jacobean politics, succession, and language. The precise nature of this connection in Butter's publication is, again, ambiguous. As Hopkins observes, the play could promote by topical extension the union of England and Scotland through the pivotal mythologies concerning Wales, successional narratives, and shared traditions and languages, but could equally challenge this application. The play's resolution through dynastic marriage could suggest merely a temporary cessation of conflict. Moreover, the comparison between the play's nations and James's Britain could also prove untenable, England, Scotland, and Wales being too divided in language and tradition to suggest assimilation and becoming 'a standing rebuke to James's fantasy of a united Britain'.⁹⁰

Uncertainty surrounding the approximate date of composition and first performance of *The Trial of Chivalry* prevents this play from being confidently described as a Jacobean drama that engages directly with James's union project. It was probably first performed between 1599 and 1604, and could be a late Elizabethan or an early Jacobean play, but in either case, questions of unity and twinned kingdoms would have been highly relevant.⁹¹ In the final years of Elizabeth's reign, the recently (and tenuously) united France and Navarre under Henri IV were a focus of attention and interest in England (and the French wars of religion were dramatized by plays throughout the 1590s, including Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* and the three parts of Dekker and Drayton's 'The Civil Wars of France'). James's position as one of the main successional candidates for the English monarchy by the end of the Elizabethan period would also have suggested a topical parallel with the twinned nations presented in the

⁹⁰ Hopkins, p.129.

⁹¹ Wiggins, *Catalogue*, IV, pp.176-79 (No.1220), and *DEEP*.

play. A Jacobean performance context is, however, suggested by Butter's printed edition of *The Trial of Chivalry* in 1605, which involves two issues of the title page. The play was printed by Simon Stafford and the original title page contains an attribution to Derby's Men; the play was then reissued with a cancel title page, which removes the company reference, contains the description 'Newly acted', and offers an alternative title, *This Gallant Cavaliero Dick Bowyer* (the previous title is, however, preserved through the head title and running title).⁹² The claim for the play's recent performance on the Jacobean stage could indicate a later composition date, the play's revival or continuation within company repertories, or a specific advertising strategy, positioning the play as a topical and current theatrical product, and promoting its 'newness' to attract readers.

Regardless of the play's actual dating and the question of its presence on the Jacobean stage, Butter's printed text is very much a Jacobean playbook. It appeared on the bookstalls in 1605 (probably early in year, given its entry in the Stationers' Register in December 1604), and coincided with a concentration of texts that engaged with the unification of England and Scotland. The cancel title-page, announcing the play was 'Newly acted', furthers its Jacobean association, and encourages an identification with the political issues of James's reign, irrespective of its actual performance context. As a material book, *The Trial of Chivalry* explores the issue of Jacobean unification, and Butter's publication of this text positions it in an interpretative context that potentially differs from its moment of composition and first performance, aligning the play with the emphases of his other publications and encouraging an ideological link with the earls of Pembroke.

Indeed, as a publisher, Butter seems intent on investing in politicized texts, and his religious publications are often re-presented to emphasize their political implications, as can be seen in his 1605 reprinted edition of Henry Crosse's *Virtue's Common-wealth, or The Highway to*

⁹² *This Gallant Cavaliero Dicke Bowyer* (STC 13527.5, 1605), A1r.

Honour (first published by John Newbery in 1603).⁹³ Newbery's first edition had drawn attention to the moral and religious overtones of the work, and contained a lengthy title-page description:

VERTVES | Common-wealth: | OR | THE HIGH-WAY TO | HONOUR |
 Wherin is discouered, that although by the dis- | guised craft of this age, vice
 and hypocrisie may be | concealed: yet by Tyme (the triall of truth) | it is most
 plainly reuealed. | Necessary for age to moue diligence, profitable for youth
 to shun | wantonnesse: and bringing to both at last de- | sired happinesse.⁹⁴

In contrast, Butter's 1605 edition offers a very different presentation of the original, replacing this description with the following, which refocuses the individual directive and moral concerns of the first edition into an emphasis on its external applications to the state and the responsibilities of rulers:

THE | Schoole of Pollicie: | OR | The araignement of State-abuses. | Directing
 Magistrates, adorning the Court, and beau- | tifying the whole Common-
 wealth. | *Nascimur pro Patria*.⁹⁵

The Latin tag, '*Nascimur pro Patria*', or, 'we are born for our country', highlights the refashioned text's application of moral precepts and advice to the external and secular concerns of state politics and government, departing from the personal and religious emphasis of the first edition. While the extent of Butter's agency in this repositioned title page is uncertain, the text's new presentation is closely connected to the publication patterns and strategies of Butter's wider output and those texts which Butter had shaped directly, suggested by, for example, the contribution of dedicatory epistles or his later gathering and ordering of news accounts, a process that involved a significant degree of editorial agency.

Butter's prioritization of texts and readings that concentrate on Jacobean political concerns becomes particularly pronounced after the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605, as anti-

⁹³ John Newbury had married Joan Butter, mother of Nathaniel Butter, after the death of her husband, Thomas Butter. John and Joan Newbery operated in Paul's Churchyard at the Sign of the Ball until his death in 1603. STC, III, pp.33-34, 123-24.

⁹⁴ Henry Crosse, *Vertves Common-wealth* (STC 6070.5, 1603), A1r.

⁹⁵ Henry Crosse, *The Schoole of Pollicie* (STC 6071, 1605), A3r.

Catholic and anti-Spanish sentiment increased in virility, heightened by official accounts of the attempted treason. Texts published by Butter almost always position religious issues in light of their political implications, as in, for example, *The Devil of the Vault* (1606) and *The Jesuits' play at Lyon in France* (1607). In the latter text, the prefatory address, 'To the Reader', which was probably written by Butter himself, announces an emphatic connection between religion and politics, religious concerns acting as a disguise and justification for political agendas. The address claims that readers 'shall find by this discourse, that Religion is made the Target to defend Treason: Ambition, the Originall, and confusion the end', and that the text is 'sent vnto thee as a warning peece shot off, to admonish thee that thou fall not into the presumption into which these Iesuites and their Disciples run headlong', asserting an instructive agenda in support of a politicized Protestant cause.⁹⁶

Similarly, Butter's publication of *The Whore of Babylon* in 1607 pursues this identification between religion and politics, which is emphasized through its printed presentation and paratexts. The play offers a thinly veiled allegory of Elizabeth I's reign and the various assassination attempts on her life, including those of William Parry (as Paridel), Edmund Campion (as Campeius), and Roderigo Lopez (as Ropus), and concludes with the defeat of the Spanish Armada. While presented as a political and military struggle between the Faerie Queen Titania and the Empress of Babylon, the play presents, as explicated in the 'Lectori', the 'Heroical vertues of our late Queene And (on the contrary part) the inueterate malice, Treasons, Machinations, Vnderminings & continual bloody stratagems of that Purple whore of Roome, to the taking away of our Princes liues, and vtter extirpation of their Kingdomes'.⁹⁷ Throughout the text, printed marginal annotations identify events and characters in the play with their historical counterparts, drawing attention to a didactic presentation of events: on B4v, for example, Titania's predecessors are successively indicated in the margins, with Elfiline as 'Hen. 7', and Oberon as 'Hen. 8', and the three kings attempting Titania's

⁹⁶ Anon/R.S., *The Iesuites play at Lyons in France* (STC 21513.5, 1607), A3r.

⁹⁷ Thomas Dekker, *The Whore of Babylon* (STC 6532, 1607), A2r.

overthrow are identified as originating from Spain, France, and Rome.⁹⁸ While the play is undoubtedly influenced by the heightened anti-Catholic sentiment pursued in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot (cautiously encouraged by official accounts of the ‘Tragicomical treason’), the political, territorial, and state implications of the allegorized doctrinal conflict are foregrounded.⁹⁹ Butter’s published text highlights these connections, and the play, drawing upon another mythologizing tradition deriving from Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596) in the naming of characters and setting of the events, offers a parallel with the Jacobean appropriation of early British history in the pursuit of political contiguities.

The amenability of Butter’s playbooks to contemporary political applications, emphasized by their printed presentation, including *The Whore of Babylon*’s marginal allegorical identifications, and the parallels drawn between Prince Henry and Edward VI on the title page of *When You See Me You Know Me*, suggest a reason for Butter’s involvement with these plays, given that his non-dramatic publications are characterized by their topicality and political concerns. In this case study of concentrated history-play publication, agency in the plays’ selection and presentation resides most centrally with Butter. In contrast to Thomas Creede, who focused on plays from Queen Elizabeth’s Men and was possibly connected to members of the company and its initial formative impulse (Chapter 1), or Andrew Wise, who was probably involved in a triangular patronage network with George Carey and the Chamberlain’s Men (Chapter 2), Butter does not appear to have a particular association with a theatrical company or patron. While Butter’s involvement in first-edition playbook publication implies some interaction with theatres, companies, or playgoers in their acquisition, his output does not point to an active publication network: he does not concentrate on plays from one theatrical company, although his playbooks are mostly derived from the three royally patronized adult companies involved in the production of historical drama, with

⁹⁸ Dekker, *Whore of Babylon*, B4v-C2r.

⁹⁹ William Barlow, *The Sermon Preached at Pavles Crosse, the tenth day of Nouember* (STC 1455, 1606), A3r.

When You See Me You Know Me and *The Whore of Babylon* from Prince Henry's Men, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Parts 1 and 2) and *The Rape of Lucrece* from Queen Anne's Men, and *King Lear* from the King's Men. Similarly, while Butter's dramatic and non-dramatic texts are frequently linked with Philip Herbert through dedications and subject matter, the evidence of this association does not suggest a patronage relationship in the same way as the connection between Andrew Wise and George Carey. Instead, Butter's practices indicate a publication venture that is dominated by stationer agency in the selection, investment, and presentation of texts that engage pointedly with the historiographical, political, and religious context of the early Jacobean period.

One of the significant features of Butter's printed playbooks that draws attention to his publishing concerns is the regular incorporation of authorizing attributions, especially in the form of title-page references to companies and dramatists. Butter's edition of *King Lear* contains the most emphatic promotion of Shakespeare's authorship in any early quarto, the first line on the title page indicating (in large type) that the book is by 'M. William Shakespeare' and contains 'HIS | True Chronicle Historie of the life and | death of King LEAR and his three | Daughters' (A4r). This presentation highlights Shakespeare's authorship, and even ownership of the play, which continues in the head title on B1r. Similarly, Butter's edition of *The London Prodigal* (1605), another play associated with the King's Men, describes the text as 'By William Shakespeare'.¹⁰⁰ Although this title-page attribution is generally regarded as false, *The London Prodigal* was added to Shakespeare's Third Folio in 1664, and was included in the Fourth Folio (1685), Nicholas Rowe's 1709-11 collected edition, Alexander Pope's 1728 collected edition, and in later single-text and collected editions through to the nineteenth century. Indeed, as Peter Kirwan argues, of all of the apocryphal plays, *The London Prodigal* has 'one of the best and least-resolved bibliographic claims to Shakespearian authorship'.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Anon., *The London Prodigall* (STC 22333, 1605), A1r.

¹⁰¹ Peter Kirwan, 'The London Prodigal, first edition', *Shakespeare Documented*, online (2017). Available at <<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/london-prodigal-first-edition>> [Accessed 30 July 2017]

Regardless of the play's actual authorship, and whether Butter believed it was by Shakespeare or not, the play's printed presentation makes a clear effort to announce and advertise Shakespeare's authorship. Butter does not appear to have had an established relationship with a particular playwright or company, as he published texts from a range of different authors and all four of the royally-patronized playing companies. However, most of his publications contain extensive title-page attributions, which suggests that one of Butter's advertising strategies was to connect his playbooks with specific dramatists and one of the royal companies. These paratexts confer a degree of authority, privilege, and even an interpretative framework onto the plays, as was pointed out in discussions of the title page of *When You See Me You Know Me* and the links it draws between Prince Henry and Edward VI. Aside from the need, in the case of *King Lear*, to distinguish this publication from the anonymous *King Leir*, Butter's particular interest in attributing his published plays to Shakespeare was possibly influenced both by Shakespeare's prominence as a printed dramatist (discussed in Chapter 2) and by the business practices of Butter's neighbouring stationer, Matthew Law, whose editions of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *1 Henry IV* all contained title-page attributions to Shakespeare. Butter's plays can be seen as responding to the notable presence of Shakespearian attributions in this part of St Paul's between 1604 and 1613, creating, in a sense, another concentrated area of Shakespearian wholesale in London.

While Butter ultimately published only one play by Shakespeare, his procurement of three plays by Thomas Heywood – *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Parts 1 and 2) and *The Rape of Lucrece* – suggests a publishing interest in Heywood's work. All of these plays went through multiple editions and proved hugely successful with readers; however, Heywood's involvement in their publication is complicated by some of his prefatory materials, which tend to express a reluctance to 'commit my plaies to the presse', and condemn the stationers involved for corrupting and mangling the texts that have 'vnknown to me, and without any of

my direction [...] accidentally come into the Printers handes'.¹⁰² According to Heywood, he agreed to the publication of *The Rape of Lucrece* to ensure it was presented 'in his native habit', while the printing of *If You Know Not Me* in 1605 (Part 1) and 1606 (Part 2) was unauthorized. Heywood's preface to *Lucrece* in 1608 and the later prologue attached to the 1639 quarto of *If You Know Not Me* claim the earlier editions were created 'by Stenography' and put 'in print, scarce one word true', suggesting that Butter acquired the play manuscripts from an auditor who 'drew | The Plot', and highlighting Butter's active agency in seeking texts for publication.¹⁰³

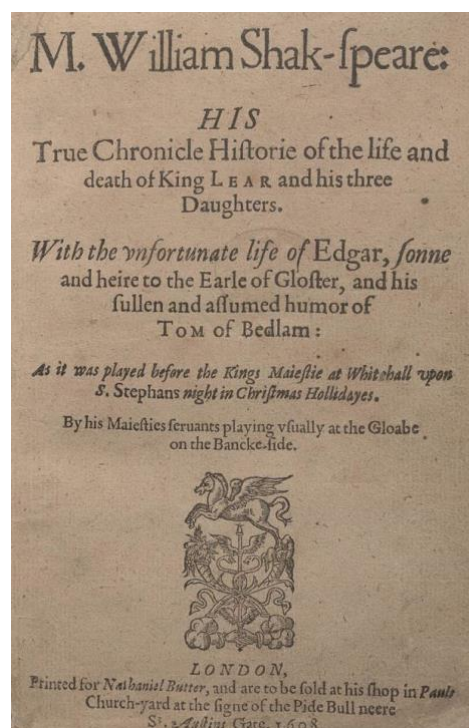


Figure 5: Title page from *King Lear* (1608; BL C.34.k.18) © The British Library

These accusations imply that Butter did not have an established connection with specific dramatists or companies and that he acquired his texts through interlocutors, possibly including audience members who had noted down the texts of plays in performance. However, in the case of Heywood's plays, there remains a possibility that the dramatist's paratextual accusations are formulaic claims that assert a conventional reluctance and modesty

¹⁰² *The Rape of Lucrece* (STC 13360, 1608), A2r.

¹⁰³ *If you know not mee, You know no body* (STC 13335, 1639), A2r.

towards publication, rather than expressing genuine criticism.¹⁰⁴ Given that Butter was responsible for the maligned editions of *If You Know Not Me*, it is puzzling that Heywood would choose him as the publisher of the ‘authorized’ *Rape of Lucrece*, unless there was some degree of cooperation between the dramatist and stationer. Moreover, Heywood continued to employ this kind of critical preface in his later publications. During the 1630s, he was involved in the publication of a significant number of his dramatic and non-dramatic works, as revealed through the authorial paratexts he contributed to these editions.¹⁰⁵ Heywood supplied paratexts to seven first-edition commercial plays between 1631 and 1638, which suggests he was actively pursuing print publication, and adopting a sceptical position on the merits of publication as part of a marketing strategy.¹⁰⁶ However, given the considerable lapse of time between Butter’s editions and this later publication explosion of Heywood’s works during the 1630s, it seems most reasonable to assume that the dramatist’s earlier criticism expressed in the preface to *The Rape of Lucrece* was genuine and that Butter had acquired these texts through other agents. Prior to Butter’s editions, only Heywood’s *1 and 2 Edward IV* (1599) and *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad* (1602) had appeared in print, both without paratextual addresses or dedications. The Butter quartos seem to have prompted Heywood to become more involved in (or alert to) print publication: from this point onwards, most of Heywood’s first editions contain authorial paratexts, and by the 1630s, Heywood appears to be closely connected to the publication of his work.¹⁰⁷ Regardless of the precise nature of the earlier relationship between Butter and Heywood, the patterns in Butter’s wider publications, together with the paratexts contributed by him or concerning his involvement,

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Bergeron, pp.159-84.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, the address ‘To the Reader’ in *The English Traueller* (STC 13315, 1633), in which Heywood argues that ‘it neuer was any great ambition in me, to bee in this kind Volumniously read’ (A3r).

¹⁰⁶ The seven professional plays are: *1 and 2 The Fair Maid of the West* (1631); *1 and 2 The Iron Age* (1632); *The English Traveller* (1633); *A Maidenhead Well Lost* (1634); and *Love’s Mistress* (1636).

¹⁰⁷ See, for example, the next first edition of a play by Heywood – *The Golden Age* (1611) – which contains an authorial address to the reader and again expresses Heywood’s reluctance to publish (STC 13325; A2r). During the 1630s, eleven professional plays by Heywood were printed for the first time, most of which contain authorial paratexts. Prior to this, eleven of Heywood’s plays had reached a printed edition over the previous thirty-year period (1599-1630), and most of these editions do not feature prefatory materials.

draw attention to his agency as a publisher. Of all the case studies involving first-edition history plays that are considered in this study, those published by Butter in the early Jacobean period are most indicative of a stationer-focused endeavour, and promote localized readings of the plays in line with Butter's wider publishing strategies.

Matthew Law, Butter's business neighbour at the Sign of the Fox near St Austin's Gate, was the central agent involved in the publication of Shakespeare's English histories during this period, producing reprints of *Richard II* (Q4 1608, Q5 1615), *Richard III* (Q4 1605, Q5 1612, Q6 1622, Q7 1629) and *1 Henry IV* (Q3 1604, Q4 1608, Q5 1613, Q6 1622). Although Law published first editions of non-dramatic texts, his dramatic output from 1604 to 1629 (which marks the end of his publishing career) consists entirely of reprinted editions, a specialism that exclusively privileges his agency in their publication and facilitates greater profit with a lower initial overlay.¹⁰⁸ Law acquired the rights to these plays from Andrew Wise on 25 June 1603, as is indicated by a transfer entry in the Stationers' Register. Interestingly, *2 Henry IV* is not part of this transfer, the Register merely specifying 'Henry the 4 the first part'.¹⁰⁹ No other attempts to obtain the rights or publish another edition of *2 Henry IV* are recorded until the First Folio in 1623, perhaps suggesting this play had not been very successful with readers and that its publication rights were allowed to lapse.

The position of Law's dramatic texts within his larger published output suggests parallels both with Wise's earlier strategies and with Butter at the nearby Sign of the Pied Bull. Law's output is similar in size to Wise's modest publication numbers, and, as with Wise, consists predominately of sermons, playbooks from the adult companies, and accounts of recent and topical events. This parallel is furthered by the fact that Law received the rights to publish the

¹⁰⁸ After publishing two first-editions at the beginning of his career, with Yarrington's *Two Lamentable Tragedies* (1601) and Heywood's (?) *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad* (1602) – the latter of which would prove very popular and warrant another four editions under Law's publication – Law started to specialize in reprints of professional plays.

¹⁰⁹ Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, Liber C, fol.98r.

sermons of Thomas Playfere from Wise, and so an effective transfer of religious and dramatic texts took place between these two stationers. Law also became the exclusive publisher, between 1601 and 1609, of William Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln from 1608. Barlow was a leading churchman involved in state politics and the authorization of texts for publication: as chaplain to Whitgift, he approved *Richard III* for publication in 1597 and, on 1 March 1600, he gave a sermon condemning the Essex ‘rebellion’, which he claimed was a threat to national security (*A sermon preached at Paul’s Cross*, STC 1454, 1601). During James’s reign, Barlow worked to bolster the king’s reputation, particularly after the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 (in, for example, *The sermon preached at Paul’s Cross, the tenth day of November, being the next Sunday after the discovery of this late horrible treason*, 1606) and in response to Robert Persons with his *Answer to a Catholic Englishman* (1609).¹¹⁰ Barlow was also commissioned to produce the official account of the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 (as *The Sum and Substance of the Conference*, which was criticized for making James side exclusively with the bishops, assigning James the famous line, ‘No Bishop, no King’).¹¹¹ The appearance in Law’s bookshop of Barlow’s texts, alongside Shakespeare’s English history plays, indicates a publishing emphasis on religious works and historical materials that encourage contemporary applications, suggesting an alignment between Law’s texts and Butter’s politically-orientated publications in the adjacent bookshop, and serving to characterize this area of Paul’s Churchyard during the first decade of James’s reign.

Indeed, the clustered republication of Shakespeare’s history plays at three key moments of uncertainty or transition indicate that Law was attempting to capitalize on readers’ interests in sensitive historical themes that could be used to reflect contemporary Jacobean politics. For the reprinted editions of *I Henry IV* in 1604 and *Richard III* in 1605, an interpretative framework is supplied by the immediate political climate of the unification project and the regular reports of conflict between the English and Scottish in response to James’s plans. Both

¹¹⁰ C. S. Knighton, ‘Barlow, William (d. 1613)’, *ODNB*, para.5-6.

¹¹¹ *The summe and substance of the conference* (STC 1456, 1604), F2v.

plays engage with issues surrounding the authority of the monarch and the potential for ensuing conflict, *I Henry IV*, in particular, drawing attention to the geographical divisions and dissenting factions that could contribute to the outbreak of civil war. In 1608, the reprints of *Richard II* and *I Henry IV* follow in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot and the increased state propaganda (including Barlow's *Sermon preached at Paul's Cross*) that heightened both the danger of the plot and the nation's redemption from destruction. The growing tensions and debates about monarchical authority and deposition, demonstrated in the 1606 Oath of Allegiance and the printed *Apology* of 1607 and 1609, which specifically address questions of regicide and usurpation, are prominent issues in both of the reprinted plays, promoting an engagement with the plays' presentations of sovereign supremacy and the threat posed by disaffected individuals. Finally, in 1612 and 1613, the reprinted editions of *Richard III* and *I Henry IV* can be read in the context of Prince Henry's death in 1612, which led to a resurgence in successional concerns, central in both of these texts, and coincided in the republication of other history plays, including *Sir Thomas Wyatt* (1612), *When You See Me You Know Me* (1613), and *I If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (1613).

Law did not significantly alter the presentation of these plays in his reprinted editions, and the evidence for local readings and applications to contemporary politics largely stems from his publication timings. The playbook title pages mostly contain the same phrasing, descriptions, and layout, and Law's use of the same printers on several occasions (such as Thomas Creede for *Richard III*) resulted in editions that were almost exact reprints of the earlier Wise quartos.¹¹² The most significant change, however, takes place in the 1608 edition of *Richard II*, Law's first reprint of the play, but its fourth quarto edition. In Law's text, the Parliament scene is printed for the first time. Law's edition consists of two issues containing variant title pages: one replicates the old paratextual materials that named the Chamberlain's Men but did not refer to the theatre of performance, and the other updates the attribution to the King's Men,

¹¹² As demonstrated, for example, by a contrastive analysis of the 1602 edition of *Richard III* (Q3, printed by Creede for Wise), and the 1605 edition (Q4, printed by Creede for Law).

naming the Globe theatre, and advertising the play's 'new additions of the Parliament Sceane, and the deposing of King Richard'.¹¹³ Critical discussions of Q4's new scene (printed from H1v to H3v), in comparison to the slightly different version contained in the First Folio, have generally been dismissive of Q4's presentation: it has been described as a memorially reconstructed or reported text, owing to lineation issues and some part-line omissions.¹¹⁴ While it is not the purpose here to consider the provenance of the Q4 scene, its textual quality should be emphasized.¹¹⁵ There are only a few sections of confusion and mislineation, generally a result of the omission of part of a line, which could be connected to manuscript illegibility.

By whatever means Law acquired the additional scene and inserted it within his quarto edition, what is especially interesting in the context of this chapter are the ways in which this scene suggests a connection with Jacobean political issues and with other playbooks on the nearby bookstall of Nathaniel Butter, namely *King Lear*. The 'Parliament Sceane', as described by the quarto, concentrates on the tensions and interactions between king and parliament, one of the central political issues emerging in Jacobean England, which dominated the union debates. In the scene, the challenges and complaints of parliament and the commons against Richard are delineated and are given as the reason for Richard's deposition, which Northumberland requests him to read publically:

No more, but that you read
 These accusations, and these greeuous crimes,
 Committed by your person, and your followers,
 Against the State and profit of this Land,
 That by confessing them, the soules of men
 May deeme that you are worthily deposde. [H2v]

The scene stages a power negotiation between Richard and his nobles, acting transparently (as they claim) on behalf of parliament and the needs of the people, and requiring Richard 'in

¹¹³ *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second* (STC 22311, 1608), A1r. Further references will be given after quotations.

¹¹⁴ *Textual Companion*, p.306-07; Maguire, *Suspect Texts*, p.298.

¹¹⁵ Maguire, *Suspect Texts*, p.298.

common view' to resign his title, so they can 'proceed without suspition' (H1v). This challenge to monarchical authority and the prioritization of parliamentary rights closely relate to the rising tensions of Jacobean politics in the aftermath of James's attempts at union and the Oath of Allegiance. The printed scene offers a topical representation of a monarch challenged and deposed by his parliament, and the language employed throughout the scene resonates with another of Shakespeare's plays printed in 1608, *King Lear*, which also engages with the divesting of monarchical authority.

Given *King Lear*'s entry in the Stationers' Register on 26 November 1607, it probably appeared on the bookstalls in early 1608, and possibly pre-dated the fourth quarto of *Richard II*, which was also published in 1608. As a Jacobean play written between 1605 and 1606, *King Lear* engages with contemporary politics through its dramatization of early British history (discussed previously), and its verbal texture draws on evocations of negation, nothingness, and undoing. This linguistic emphasis is paralleled in the parliament scene of *Richard II*, which foregrounds a rhetoric of negation, as Richard resigns his monarchical title and power:

I, no no I, for I must nothing bee,
Therefore no no, for I resigne to thee.
Now marke me how I will vndoe my selfe:
I giue this heauie waight from off my head,
And this vnweildie Scepter from my hand. [H2r]

Adding to this enactment of resignation, throughout the inserted scene, Richard is identified by the speech prefix 'Rich.', in contrast to the play's earlier usage of 'King', thus staging an additional 'textual' deposition. Although patterns in speech prefixes cannot be attributed to a specific publication strategy (most likely deriving from the manuscript source), their presentation in the printed text contributes to a readerly experience that draws attention to Richard's resignation of power and the correspondence with King Lear's (voluntary) divestment, leading to division and civil war. While it is not the intention to propose that the parliament scene was added because of its parallels with *King Lear* and Jacobean politics, the

concurrent publication of these two plays in 1608 at neighbouring bookstalls near St Austin's Gate positions them in a similar interpretative and geographical context and encourages comparative readings between the plays.

This publication coincidence in 1608 draws attention to another wholesale concentration of Shakespeare's plays, which can be identified through the practices of Butter and Law during the early Jacobean period. Together, these stationers were responsible for the majority of first and reprint editions connected with Shakespeare between 1604 and 1612, making St Austin's Gate in Paul's Churchyard a focal point for Shakespearian publication, which takes over from the previous concentration between the signs of the Angel and the White Greyhound in Paul's Cross. With Law's successful reprints of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *I Henry IV*, and Butter's first editions of *King Lear* and *The London Prodigal*, all containing prominent title-page attributions to Shakespeare, this part of St Paul's possibly became associated with Shakespeare's name in print between about 1604 and 1609. Indeed, the prominence and success of these editions reveals that consumer demand for Shakespeare's playbooks was still great, which challenges the critical accounts that describe the decrease in Shakespearian first editions during the Jacobean period as indicative of a reduced readerly interest.¹¹⁶ The continued demand for Shakespeare's plays supports the alternative theory proposed at the end of Chapter 2 in relation to the dissipation of the publishing network involving Andrew Wise.

Indeed, the early Jacobean period witnessed some of the highest rates of playbook publication, suggesting a growing interest in professional plays as texts to be read. In addition to the concentration of first and reprint editions of history plays, dominated by the practices of Butter and Law, a second publication concentration featuring first editions from the children's companies can be identified. The period records high overall numbers of playbook editions, and significantly, the stationers involved in the publication of plays from the adult companies

¹¹⁶ Cf. Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks', pp.384-86.

and children's troupes do not usually overlap, which indicates a division in publishing specialisms that has implications for considering play survival and presentation. Butter, Law, Thomas Pavier, and John Wright regularly published plays from the adult companies, most of which deal with historical subject matter and relate to other non-dramatic works for sale on their bookstalls, whereas stationers including William Aspley and John Hodgets tended to focus on the publication of first editions from the boys' companies, creating a publication division between the adult and children companies.

This dominance of the boys' companies in the market for professional playbooks during the first decade of the seventeenth century has been observed by critics such as Sonia Massai and Lukas Erne.¹¹⁷ Six plays from the boys' companies were published in 1605, seven in 1606, ten in 1607, and eight in 1608, numbers which surpass those from the adult companies and the earlier averages for playbook publication.¹¹⁸ As Massai has shown, the high numbers of published plays from the children's companies suggest a readerly demand for these plays, perhaps owing to their presentation as 'different, more self-consciously literary texts' that contained a range of paratexts, including dedications, addresses, and prefaces, informed by 'a sustained metadiscourse about the purpose of playing, playwriting, playgoing and playreading'.¹¹⁹ Given that the concentration in playbook publication during the early Jacobean period is mostly comprised of history plays from the adult companies and these elevated and 'self-consciously literary' comedies from the Children of the Queen's Revels and the Children of Paul's, the prominence of history plays is particularly noteworthy, considering that they lacked the paratexts that positioned the boys' plays as texts for a distinguished public and perhaps contributed to their success as printed playbooks (see Appendix D). The presentation of history plays from the adult companies suggests an alternative publishing strategy, namely the pursuit of parallels between printed historical dramas and recent non-

¹¹⁷ Massai, 'The mixed fortunes of Shakespeare in print' in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Kidnie and Massai, pp.57-68 (pp.59-61). Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p.102.

¹¹⁸ Statistics include first and reprint editions, and have been calculated using *DEEP*.

¹¹⁹ Massai, 'Mixed fortunes', pp.60-61.

dramatic texts that engage with similar histories and debates, drawing attention to the position of history plays within the political and historiographical discourses of the period.

Conclusions

As opposed to the idea that the early Jacobean period marked the decline of the history play on the commercial stages, this chapter has shown that historical engagement, especially as it could be applied to contemporary politics, was prominent both on stage and in print. In particular, legendary British history emerges as a central feature of performance representations, printed playbooks, and non-dramatic publications, drawing on the traditions promoted by the Jacobean court, and coinciding with some of the most pronounced political tensions surrounding issues of union, allegiance, succession, and monarchical authority. Matthew Law's reprints of Shakespeare's histories, most notably, *Richard II*, can be positioned within this contemporary climate; the timing and presentation of the playbooks (as well as the wholesale characteristics of particular bookshop locations and stationers' wider publishing outputs) encourage localized readings that relate to these pressing political concerns.

In addressing examples of synchronic engagement, this chapter has concentrated on the publication strategies and specialisms of Nathaniel Butter, a stationer who demonstrates considerable interest in the politics of union and in pursuing patronage connections to aristocratic individuals associated with ideas of twinned nations, namely Philip Herbert. Butter is particularly important in this study as the stationer who displays the greatest independent agency in his investment in commercial history plays. His publication patterns, playbook presentation, and lack of a theatrical company specialization suggest he operated independently of direct patronage and theatrical company connections, unlike Andrew Wise. Between 1605 and 1609, agency in first-edition history play publication resides with Butter, providing an important case study of stationer influence on the propagation of plays, as well as evidence of concentrated local readings. Indicative of his prevailing publication interests,

as well as changes within the book trade, Butter would go on to specialize in the publication of newsbooks and other political material in the 1620s, at the same time as playbook publication started to become significantly influenced by companies, censors, and impresarios (developments featured in the next two chapters).

4

**‘Take heede, how they intermeddle by Penne, or Speech, with causes
of State’: Controlling and redefining the history play in
performance and print, 1619 – 1625¹**

Unlike previous chapters, this chapter is not dependent on a prominent peak in the performance or publication patterns of history plays, but, instead, from a series of events and efforts that functioned to control and reshape historical dramatizations, and so have important consequences for understanding dramatic representations of the past, their application to contemporary contexts, and the agency of aristocratic patrons and theatrical companies in taking over privileges previously residing more securely with stationers. In fact, this period actually witnesses a reduction in the number of history plays in print, especially in the publication of first editions, contrasting with the emphases of previous chapters. However, what distinguishes the final years of the Jacobean period from other times when the publication of history plays appears to recede, during the 1610s or the late 1620s, for example, is the evidence for the increasing vitality and importance of the extant history plays, which are used to reflect topical political events, and the continued interest of audiences and readers in such plays and their applications.

Regular reprints of older history plays (including *Richard III*, *1 Henry IV*, *Edward II*, *When You See Me You Know Me*, and *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*), evidence of audiences’ and readers’ engagement with professional history plays (as in the Dering manuscript and references in the letters of John Chamberlain), and significant new offerings, including *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* (performed in 1619, first printed in 1883), *The Duchess of Suffolk* (performed in 1624, printed in 1631), and *A Game at Chess* (performed in

¹ James I, *Proclamation against excesse of Lauish and Licentious Speech of matters of State* (STC 8649, 1620), 1 sheet.

1624, printed in 1625), suggest the importance and utility of dramatic engagements with the past. As this chapter will argue, the late Jacobean period witnessed the temporal range of the history play moving closer to its own time of composition, incorporating current events and challenging the boundaries between the past and present (as Daniel Woolf discusses in relation to news reports, which provide a useful comparison).² This thematic and temporal currency has been recognized by critics such as Paul Salzman, Margot Heinemann, and Jerzy Limon, and, as Salzman suggests, ‘the political crises of the 1620s can be seen reflected in the literature’, the history play occupying an important position within this discourse.³

While the Protestant pamphleteer Thomas Scott defended his own writing in *Vox Regis* (1624) by drawing attention to the oppositional and confrontational potential of plays, where ‘Kings are content in Playes and Maskes to be admonished of diuers things’, the positioning of historical dramatizations cannot be narrowly or consistently defined.⁴ As Heinemann argues, ‘there was no single polarized parliamentary or national opposition with a coherent policy [...] Rather, in a society under increasing strain and tension, there were shifting divisions of opinion and questioning among different groups and interests concerning the nature and use of power’.⁵ This political fluidity is reflected in the history play. There are significant problems with categorizing history plays through using anachronistic binaries (such as ‘royalist’ and ‘oppositional’), or through suggesting that a particular politics or ideology somehow is inherent in a play. As Salzman proposes, texts from the 1620s repeatedly suggest that ‘reading/interpreting/viewing was constructed as a political and politicized activity, and this is reflected in constantly shifting responses to a constantly shifting political scene’.⁶

² ‘News, history and the construction of the present in early modern England’, in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.80-118.

³ Salzman, *Literature and Politics in the 1620s: ‘Whisper’d Counsells’* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.1; Heinemann, ‘Drama and opinion in the 1620s: Middleton and Massinger’ in *Theatre and Government Under the Early Stuarts*, ed. by J.R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) pp.237-65; Jerzy Limon, *Dangerous Matter: English Drama and Politics in 1623/24* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁴ *Vox Regis* (STC 22105.5, 1624), E1v-E2r.

⁵ Heinemann, ‘Drama’, p.238.

⁶ Salzman, p.7.

To expand upon Salzman's argument, the history plays of the late Jacobean period can be usefully examined through a network of controlling influences that have shaped their survival, presentation, and development, and through which localized readings and responses can be detected. In particular, the dominance of the King's Men on stage and in print, the centrality of the Herbert family in shaping theatrical and publication patterns, the influence of domestic political tensions and the events of the Thirty Years' War, and increasing efforts at publication and performance censorship all contributed to the distinctive position of the history play during this time and to later critical perspectives on its development. While these factors were not connected as part of a defined strategy, their effect was cumulative, and this chapter will concentrate in particular on agents of control and censorship in the theatrical and political context of the period, an approach encouraged by Cyndia Clegg's *Press Censorship in Jacobean England* (2001), which highlights the period's distinctive and reactionary control mechanisms. As Heinemann also argues, 'failure to take full account of pervasive censorship and self-censorship has tended to mask real ideological and political conflicts underlying the drama of the 1620s'.⁷ By focusing on production agents, specifically the King's Men and the Herbert family, as well as on regulatory attempts at control and censorship, a closer understanding of the significance of historical drama in engaging with current events and political anxieties can be reached, which will also lead to a wider conception of what constitutes a 'history' play in the early modern period.

Performing 'history' in the late Jacobean period: The privileging of current events

The political debates of the late Jacobean period, which, to a significant degree, made their way into contemporary pamphlets, ballads, and professional plays, were dominated by the fact that there had been an outbreak of religious and territorial conflicts in Europe (collectively and retrospectively named the Thirty Years' War), and by England's involvement with these events in conjunction with James's efforts to secure a Spanish marriage match for his son,

⁷ Heinemann, 'Drama', p.239.

Charles. The continental crisis had started in 1618, when the Bohemian estates rebelled against their new Habsburg ruler, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, who, as a staunch Catholic, had set out to impose religious orthodoxy throughout Bohemia, a religiously pluralist state. In response, in August 1619, the Bohemians offered the throne to Frederick V, Elector Palatine (and James I's son-in-law), who accepted, despite the controversy surrounding the election and the revelation that the Bohemians had made similar proposals to other European Protestant leaders, including Bethlen Gabor of Transylvania.⁸ When Ferdinand was made Holy Roman Emperor on 28 August 1619, he made preparations to regain his Bohemian throne and, at the battle of the White Mountain in 1620, Frederick was defeated, fleeing to The Hague, where he set up his court in exile, along with his wife, Elizabeth (James I's daughter). The conflict escalated as other European powers intervened, their involvement partly precipitated by the expiry of the Twelve Years' Truce between the Dutch Republic and Spain in 1621. By the early 1620s, a continental war on the basis of religious and political divisions and shifting alliances had developed, with the Catholic Habsburgs and their allies (including Spain) on one side, and the Protestant, anti-Habsburg forces (including the Dutch Republic) on the other.⁹

These events aroused extraordinary public interest in England, owing to general support for the cause of Protestantism and concern for the growing political power of the Habsburgs and Spain, but also because Frederick, the exiled Elector Palatine and so-called 'winter king' of Bohemia, was married to James I's daughter, Elizabeth. As Clegg observes, Elizabeth and Frederick represented 'to many of James's subjects the ideals of English Protestant nationalism, account[ing] for the overwhelming interest exhibited in parliament, the press, and the pulpit'.¹⁰ The Protestant pamphleteers Thomas Scott and John Reynolds wrote a series of accounts on the European conflicts, which lamented England's limited involvement and castigated a foreign policy that seemed to favour a Spanish alliance and pacifist agenda at any

⁸ See Geoffrey Parker (ed.), *The Thirty Years' War*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.44-46.

⁹ See Lockyer, *Early Stuarts*, pp.157-68.

¹⁰ Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.161.

cost. Reynold's *Votivae Angliae* (printed in three editions in 1624) and *Vox Coeli* (five editions in 1624), and Scott's *Vox Populi* (seven editions in 1620 and two in 1624) and *The Second Part of Vox Populi* (four editions in 1624) were among the most notorious and widely circulated pamphlets, printed in multiple editions that, in order to protect their authors and publishers, regularly omitted imprint locations or provided false details.¹¹ Immediately announcing its political positioning and adopted patrons, *The Second Part of Vox Populi* was dedicated to Frederick and Elizabeth, 'King and Queene of Bohemia', and 'the most Illustrious and victorious, Maurice, Prince of Orange', while Scott's *Vox Regis* (1624) drew attention to the contemporary climate that had warranted his series of pamphlets:

There is nothing of more moment for the happinesse of a Kingdome then that the Prince and People should know each other. For where this is not there can be no confidence, but iealousie takes place on both sides, and all actions are subiect to double and so to doubtfull interpretation.¹²

Suggesting James was pursuing a policy and alliance significantly at odds with the religious and political views of his subjects, Scott's pamphlets encouraged active intervention in the European conflict and the rejection of further negotiations with Catholic Spain, nostalgically recalling and fashioning a history of England's militant predecessors by presenting accounts of Protestant heroes, including Elizabeth I, Essex, Walter Raleigh, and Prince Henry, as 'advocating active support for Frederick and Elizabeth'.¹³ Notably paralleling these efforts, Butter issued reprints of *When You See Me You Know Me* in 1621 and *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Parts 1 and 2) in 1623, which could similarly be read as positioning England and its monarchs as the defenders of Protestant religious and political authority. Particularly after Spain's entry into the continental crisis in 1620, prominent voices on the Privy Council (including that of William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke) and in the

¹¹ For example, Scott's *Vox Populi* omits any reference to its imprint location or the stationers involved, and Reynold's *Vox Coeli, or News from Heaven*, claims the text was 'Printed in Elisium', fitting with its title and the pamphlet's presentation of a dialogue in Heaven between former Tudor and Stuart royal figures (STC 20946.6, 1624), A2r.

¹² *Second Part of Vox Populi* (STC 22103, 1624), A1r and *Vox Regis*, [.·.] r.

¹³ David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp.199-200.

parliamentary session of 1621 vehemently advocated England's assistance of the Palatine's cause and the containment of Spanish influence.

While James allowed a volunteer force, under the command of Sir Horace Vere, to be sent to the Palatinate, he was reluctant to engage officially in the conflict. As David Norbrook argues, 'the issue was not just one of pacifism versus militancy but also of choices between different military options and diplomatic alignments which raised important ideological questions.'¹⁴ Some militant Protestants were interested in the wider expansion of Protestantism, while others were focused on the restoration of the Palatine to Frederick. James, although supportive of his son-in-law's claim to the Palatine, was critical of his acceptance of the Bohemian throne, and remained intent on the Spanish marriage alliance between Prince Charles and the Infanta Maria, advocating a pro-Spanish policy throughout the early years of the continental conflict. Exacerbated by the execution of Raleigh in 1618, which was seen to be, as Marina Hila describes, a 'tactical move to placate Spain for his infringing the Spanish monopoly in South America', popular indignation at Spanish influence reached a peak in 1623, during the sojourn of Prince Charles and George Villiers, duke of Buckingham, at the Spanish court to further the marriage negotiations.¹⁵ Broadside ballads, corantoës, and manuscript poems engaging closely with political events and offering direct criticism of James's foreign policies and proclivity towards royal favourites were circulated widely. Probably written in 1623, the manuscript libel, 'Some would complaine of Fortune & blinde chance', presents a detailed assessment of James's reign, which addresses the rise and decline of particular individuals and factions, and draws attention to the destabilizing role played by court favourites at a time when Buckingham's influence was at its height and igniting vociferous popular and parliamentary opposition:

For presentlie the kinge affects his peace
proposinge nothinge but delights increase,

¹⁴ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p.200.

¹⁵ Marina Hila, 'Dishonourable Peace: Fletcher and Massinger's *The False One* and Jacobean Foreign Policy', *Cahiers Élisabéthains*, 72 (2007); 21-30 (p.21).

And as the kinge gives way, each one pretends
to honour him, though out of private endes.¹⁶

Clegg posits that ‘a deepening chasm emerged between the King and his people’, and indeed, this view is articulated explicitly in the manuscript libel and in Scott’s *Vox Regis*, referred to previously.¹⁷ Similarly, the Venetian ambassador in England (until July 1622), Girolamo Lando, reported that even the preachers who ‘daily exhort the people to obedience’ joined in expressing ‘seditious and most dangerous opinions, offering the strongest opposition to the Spanish marriage, both privately and publicly, with supplication, advice, and prediction’. As Lando suggests, James’s refusal to support the effective symbols of continental Protestantism, Frederick and Elizabeth, combined with his pursuit of a marriage alliance with Spain, served to smite ‘his people to the heart about their religion’. Indeed, Lando even claimed that ‘the King holds his realm practically despotically and does what he pleases without taking counsel of any one’.¹⁸

Responding to the political climate of heightened debate and the publication of texts that opposed royal policy, James issued a series of proclamations aimed at controlling the circulation – ‘by Penne, or Speech,’ – of objectionable material.¹⁹ Attempts at regulating the circulation and propagation of potentially contentious material can be observed at specific points throughout the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Elizabeth’s 1586 Star Chamber decree, for example, outlined the parameters and consequences for censorious publications; however, the late Jacobean period is particularly notable for the extent of these efforts and their reactionary severity.²⁰ On 24 December 1620, James issued *A proclamation against excess of lavish and licentious speech of matters of state*, claiming that ‘the affaires of our

¹⁶ Anon., ‘Some would complaine of Fortune & blinde chance’ (K1i), *Early Stuart Libels: an edition of poetry from manuscript sources*, ed. by Alastair Bellany and Andrew McRae. Early Modern Literary Studies Text Series I (2005), Web. <<http://purl.oclc.org/emls/texts/libels/>>, lines 45-48.

¹⁷ Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.161.

¹⁸ Lando quoted in Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.162.

¹⁹ James I, *Proclamation*, 1620.

²⁰ ‘The newe Decrees of the Starre Chamber for orders in printinge’ (1586) in Arber (ed.), II; pp.807-12.

Kingdomes’ and ‘the businesse and interests of forraine States’ had caused ‘a greater opennesse and libertie of discourse, euen concerning matters of State, (which are no Theames, or subiects fit for vulgar persons, or common meetings) then hath been in former times, used or permitted’, and issuing the following command:

Wee haue thought it necessary, by the aduice of Our Priuie Councell, to giue forewarning vnto Our louing Subiects, of this excesse and presumption; And straitly to command them and euery of them, from the highest to the lowest, to take heede, how they intermeddle by Penne, or Speech, with causes of State, and secrets of Empire, either at home, or abroad, but containe themselues within that modest and reuerent regard, of matters aboue their reach and calling [...] As also not to giue attention, or any manner of applause or entertainment to such discourse without acquainting some of Our Priuie Councell, or other principall Officers therewithall, respectiue to the place where such speeches shall be vsed, within the space of foure and twentie houres, vnder paine of imprisonment, and Our high displeasure.²¹

While similar attempts at control had been issued by previous monarchs, this proclamation is particularly noteworthy for what it suggests about the prominence of commentary upon contemporary political events and also for the extremity of punishment outlined for those who do not inform relevant authorities (within twenty-four hours) of an objectionable discourse. It was followed in 1621 by another similarly-titled proclamation, which reiterated the terms of the 1620 order, while admonishing subjects for their ineffectual adherence to its conditions: ‘Wee are giuen to vnderstand, that notwithstanding the strictnesse of Our commandement, the inordinate libertie of vnreuerent speech, touching matters of high nature, vnfit for vulgar discourse, doth dayly more and more increase: Wee haue thought it necessary to redouble Our Princely Direction, and strait Charge in that behalfe’.²² James’s injunction highlights his concern over the increasing political discourses ‘touching matters of high nature’ that characterized this period and provoked more extensive attempts at control and regulation.

Further proclamations were also published, including, in 1623, *A proclamation against the disorderly printing, uttering, and dispersing of books, pamphlets, &c*, which prohibited any

²¹ James I, *Proclamation*, 1620.

²² James I, *A Proclamation against excesse of lauish and licentious speech of matters of State* (STC 8668, 1621), 1 sheet.

‘Subiect, Denizen, or Stranger’ to ‘imprint, or cause to be imprinted, or bring in, or cause to be brought in, into this Our Realme, or sow, stitch, binde, sell, put to sale, or disperse any seditious, schismaticall, or other scandalous Bookes, or Pamphlets’, against ‘the forme and meaning of any Restraint or Ordinance, contained or to be contained in any Statue or Lawes of this Realme’.²³ While this proclamation was partly on behalf of the Stationers’ Company who were seeking to regulate the English Stock books, this series of controls, in conjunction with increased repercussions for offenders, indicate, as Clegg describes, ‘a heightened awareness of government censorship between 1620 and 1625’.²⁴

The efficacy of these attempts is, however, questionable, and a significant number of publications and manuscript accounts that engage with contemporary affairs can be witnessed between 1619 and 1625. Secretary Calvert reported that ‘ther be dyvers stationers soe soone as they heeare of anie such bookes, as have noe publicke authoritie they indevor upon whatsoever condicion to gett them in their hands and [...] sells them’.²⁵ Nevertheless, a clear effort was made to curtail commentary on matters of state during the late Jacobean period, marking an intensification of censorship practices. Several texts were suppressed, including Scott’s *Vox Populi* (1620) and Reynolds’s *Votivae Angliae* (1624) and *Vox Coeli* (1624), and offending individuals were imprisoned or reprimanded, including the preachers John Everard, Samuel Phillips, Thomas Young, and Thomas Winniffe, and the stationers Nathaniel Butter and William Stansby.²⁶ Indeed, the duke of Buckingham remarked in a letter to Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador in 1622, that ‘no man can sooner, now, mutter a word in the Pulpit, though indirectly, against it, but he is presently caught and set in streight prison’.²⁷ As Clegg points out, while a significant number of publications and individuals continued to discuss

²³ James I, *A Proclamation against the disorderly Printing, vttering, and dispersing of Bookes, Pamphlets, &c.* (STC 8714, 1623), 2 sheets.

²⁴ Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.186.

²⁵ Quoted in Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.186.

²⁶ See Clegg, *Jacobean England*, pp.168-87.

²⁷ Anon, *Cabala, Sive Scrinia Sacra: Mysteries of State and Government in Letters of Illustrious Persons and Great Ministers of State* (Wing/C185, 1663), ii1v.

matters of state, ‘James repeatedly sought to silence opposition through one form of royal edict or another’, and the period witnessed several notable acts of censorship that contrasted markedly with previous procedures.²⁸ In particular, Clegg draws attention to the action taken by Secretary Calvert in 1621 against the stationers Edward Allde and Thomas Archer for their book on Frederick, Elector Palatine, and against William Stansby and Nathaniel Butter for a pamphlet denouncing Ferdinand II’s claim to the Bohemian throne on the basis of his illegitimate birth.²⁹ As opposed merely to suppressing the books, the stationers were imprisoned and their presses destroyed. These acts of censorship took place, as Clegg identifies, ‘outside of the regular venues we associate with sanctioning illegal printing’, and were pursued by the Court of Star Chamber and the High Commission.³⁰

It is in this context of increasing censorship, combined with heightened interest in contemporary issues and commentary, that the position of the history play can be usefully situated. Providing both a spur and a warning for engaging with recent events, plays written during the late Jacobean period negotiate the boundaries of their applications, some pursuing topical parallels through the dramatization of historical material, and others directly presenting recent events on stage, blurring the boundary between history and current events. Of course, earlier history plays had also employed contemporary issues, and audiences and readers regularly utilized a play’s potential for topical application. As discussed in Chapter 2, the performance of ‘the kylling of Kyng Richard the Second’ on 7 February 1601 was probably Shakespeare’s play, but regardless of its precise nature, the events that followed the performance indicate the currency and utility (for both Essex’s supporters and their accusers) of a play based on Richard’s reign, as referred to in a concentration of contemporary

²⁸ Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.176.

²⁹ See *A Briefe Description of the reasons that make the Declaration of the Ban made against the King of Bohemia, as being Elector Palatine* (1621), published by Allde and Archer, and *A plaine demonstration of the vnlawful svccession of the now emperovr Ferdinand the second, because of the incestuous Marriage of his Parents* (1620?), printed by Stansby for Butter and carrying an imprint location of ‘the Hage’.

³⁰ Clegg, *Jacobean England*, pp.184-85.

commentary and court proceedings.³¹ However, by the late Jacobean period, the potential for plays to comment on contemporary issues was being explored through the direct presentation of current events on stage. Earlier plays had tended to explore this application through histories set in a distant past, and while some plays had presented recent histories and reports on stage, these were usually local stories, such as an account of a murder in *Arden of Faversham* (1592). What is particularly striking about plays from the late Jacobean period is their direct presentation of highly significant international political events that were unfolding and developing at that moment.

Early modern discourses concerning history, current events, and the passage of time support the idea that plays which dramatize the very recent past should be discussed as ‘histories’. As J. Paul Hunter observes, it is difficult to pinpoint when the present time became ‘an urgent issue in the English cultural consciousness’, and as Daniel Woolf argues, in the period before 1641, individuals believed that ‘the present was only an existential instant, an ephemeral joint between a dead past and an unborn future, through most of the period recognizing no “present” beyond that instant’.³² Current events already belonged to the past, albeit a recent past, which complicates any distinction between news and history: indeed, as Woolf observes, the corantos of the 1620s describe news as ‘history’ and were often ‘published under the rubric of history, a further reinforcement of the argument that at its earliest stage the published news was perceived as a record of the recent past, not of an ongoing present’.³³ In a similar way, differentiating between a play set in a distant historical past and one engaging with recent events becomes increasingly problematic when considering early modern perceptions of time, especially as the thematic parallels between such plays as *The False One* and *A Game at Chess* encourage interpretative links between them. Through their dramatic form, history plays promote the re-creation and enactment of their subjects, bringing their pasts into an ephemeral

³¹ See Hammer, pp.1-35.

³² Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (London: Norton, 1990), p.168; Woolf, pp.80, 83-84.

³³ Woolf, p.98.

performance ‘present’, and further blurring distinctions between distant and recent pasts as both were similarly negotiated on stage. Woolf sees news as standing ‘on the cusp between past and future’, and arousing ‘recollection, anticipation, expectation, or apprehension’, which usefully describes the position of history plays during this period, the ways in which varying pasts were repositioned in a performance present and had the potential to shape future events, and the increasing controls over historical-political discourses which indicate a concern over their application and import.³⁴

Given James’s increasing unwillingness to tolerate open discussion of contemporary affairs and matters of state, it is hardly surprising that some of these history plays were censored for their topical representations. The two most notable instances involve Fletcher and Massinger’s *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* in 1619 and Middleton’s *A Game at Chess* in 1624, which frame the period under discussion in this chapter. In *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt*, Fletcher and Massinger explore the downfall of their eponymous protagonist, a statesman and military leader in the Dutch Republic, and *landsadvocaat* for the Estates of Holland, who was executed on 13 May 1619 for allegedly conspiring with Spain against Maurice, Prince of Orange, captain-general of the Estates of the other provinces. James I was an ally of Maurice, and officially opposed the actions of the historical Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. The play takes a similar approach, castigating Barnavelt as an ambitious and conspiring statesman, whose involvement in treasonous actions is clearly presented. However, these events were a source of concern and political ambiguity in England. Oldenbarnevelt’s arrest, trial, and execution were controversial, his arraignment taking place in a special court mostly consisting of his personal enemies. In a letter to Dudley Carleton on 31 May 1619, John Chamberlain expressed his uncertainty about the accusations levelled at Oldenbarnevelt:

I will not dissemble that divers of goode judgement thincke he had hard measure, considering that no cleere matter of conspiracie with the ennemies of the state appeares, or can be proved, so that yt seemes to be meere matter of faction and opposition rather then infidelitie or treacherie, which though perhaps in England might be found treasonable or within that compasse, yet

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.81.

in a new upstart commonwealth that hath so long contended and stands so much upon libertie, they were not to proceed with such rigour against a man of his yeares and service, specially when the sparing of the rest makes manifest shew that they shot only at him.³⁵

As Chamberlain's account suggests, Oldenbarnevelt's trial and execution aroused considerable interest in England, generating numerous discourses that encouraged a comparison with domestic policies and position-taking, and expressed concern about the political machinations governing the relationships between subjects and rulers.

While taking the official line, Fletcher and Massinger's play explores the unsettling tensions emerging from the shifting alliances and power struggles which were starting to dominate international political events as Europe became embroiled in complex religio-political conflicts. The play draws attention to the utility of religious arguments in pursuing a secular political agenda. Barnaveit claims that the defence of his Arminian faith motivates his actions and that he dyes 'for saving this vnthanckfull Cuntry'.³⁶ Barnaveit's position is challenged by one of the lords at his execution:

Yo[u]r Romaine end, to make men
 imagine yo[u]r stung conscience fortedefide,
 no, nor yo[u]r ground Religion: Examine all men
 branded w[i]th such fowle syns as you now dye for,
 and you shall find their first stepp still, Religion:
 Gowrie in Scotland, 'twas his maine pretention:
 was not he honest too? his Cuntries ffather?
 those fyery Speritts next, that hatched in England
 that bloody Powder-Plot; and thought like meteors
 to haue flashd their Cuntries peace out in a Moment
 were not their Barrells loden w[i]th Religion? [p.82; fol.28a]

Strikingly, the lord's examples of destabilizing conspiracies are both drawn from the life of James I, namely the Gowrie conspiracy of 1600 and the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, and throughout its action, the play is linked to domestic issues and debates. An implicit assessment

³⁵ McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, II, p.239. See also Chamberlain's letters on 19 March and 8 May 1619 (II, pp. 223, 236).

³⁶ Philip Massinger, *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnaveit*, ed. by Wilhelmina Frijlinck (Amsterdam: Van Dorssen, 1922), p.82 (BL Add. MS 18653, fol.28b). Further references will be given after quotations.

of James's policies recurs at various points. Direct references and parallels suggest criticism of James's hesitancy in political defence and his pacifist position, and the text reserves praise for Elizabeth I, 'our Patronesse of happie memory', in a eulogistic celebration of monarchical figures in which James is unimaginatively and unenthusiastically described as 'the king of Britaine that now is' (p.63; fol.22b).

Dramatizing exceptionally recent international political events that were of great interest to audiences in England, Fletcher and Massinger's play, which remained in manuscript until 1883, was ready to perform in August 1619, just a few months after the historical Van Oldenbarnevelt's execution in May 1619.³⁷ However, according to a letter from Thomas Locke to Dudley Carleton on 14 August, the King's Men 'at th' instant were prohibited by my Lord of London' to perform the play.³⁸ The involvement of the Bishop of London was unusual, representing, as Gurr describes, 'a distinctly non-routine and urgent act of censorship', as it was only in the case of specific complaints that the Bishop of London intervened as a censor.³⁹ A second letter on 27 August reports that the King's Men 'have fownd the meanes to goe through with the play of Barnevelt, and it hath had many spectators and receaved applause', which suggests the play was sufficiently reformed to meet the bishop's approval.⁴⁰ This swift allowance of *Barnaveit* is particularly significant, indicating, as Gurr argues, the growing importance of current events as material for dramatization in the London theatres, and the 'urge to stage serious political comment'.⁴¹

In terms of its revisions, the play as it survives in manuscript shows signs of George Buc's censorship, who was Master of the Revels in 1619. The nature of the deletions and emendations in the manuscript that can be traced to Buc and are in his handwriting suggest,

³⁷ The first printed edition of the play appeared in the second volume of A.H. Bullen's *Collection of Old English Plays* (1883).

³⁸ *CSP Domestic*, X, p.71.

³⁹ Gurr, *SPC*, p.134.

⁴⁰ *CSP Domestic*, X, p.73.

⁴¹ Gurr, *SPC*, p.135.

as Janet Clare argues, that the principle concern of the censor was in re-presenting the material so it would not cause offence to any of England's allies or damage diplomatic relations.⁴² A significant proportion of the changes relate to James's political ally, Maurice, Prince of Orange. The censor apparently objected to Maurice's representation and treatment in certain parts of the play, including his frequent appearance on stage. In Folio 4b (p.11), Maurice is prevented from entering the Council meeting, and Buc's marginal (and initialled) comment notes, 'I like not this: neith[e]r do I think that the pr[ince] was thus disgracefully vsed. besides he is to much presented', with the offending lines marked for deletion. Similarly, on Folio 23a (pp.65-66), Maurice is accused of military cowardice by Barnavelt, which the censor deletes and over which replacement lines are added, and, on Folio 7b (p.20), the following lines, in which Barnavelt describes Maurice as an ambitious tyrant whose government is more oppressive than Spanish rule, are marked for deletion and replaced with a shorter and politically innocuous alternative:

[We are lost for ever: and from ffreemen growne] slaues
 slaves to the pride of one we haue raisd vp
 vnto this <g . . . t> height, the Spanish yook
 is soft, and easie, if compard with what
 we suffer from this popular S<ar>ke, that hath
 stolne like a cunning thief the Armyes hearts
 to serve his own ambitious ends:⁴³

Probably motivated by a desire to curtail potentially offensive representations of both Dutch and Spanish allies, as James was, at this time, pursuing peaceful relations with Spain and exploring the possibility of marriage negotiations with Prince Charles and the Infanta Maria, this deletion reveals an awareness of drama's ability to comment on and influence international politics, especially when a play involves the direct presentation of current figures and events. The deletion indicates a connection between the material contained in

⁴² Janet Clare, *'Art made tongue-tied by authority': Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p.177; Frijlinck in Massinger, *Barnavelt*, pp.xiv-xv.

⁴³ The quoted text within square brackets is not marked for deletion. The replacement lines provided in the manuscript are:

Slaues so Contemptible: as no worthie Prince
 that would haue men, not sluggish Beates his Servants
 would ere vouchsafe the owning, Now my ffrends

[p.20, fol.7b]

contemporary news pamphlets and the subjects of commercial plays. Indeed, another significant section that is marked for omission explicitly addresses the application of historical precedents to current events:

Octavius, when he did affect the Empire,
and strove to tread vpon the neck of Rome,
and all hir auncient freedoms, [tooke that course] cutt of his opposites
[that now is practisd on you]: for the Cato's
and all free speritts slaine, or els proscribd
that durst have stird against him, he then sceasd
the absolute rule of all: [you can apply this]:
[...]
and when too late you see this Goverment
changed [to a Monarchie] to another forme, you'll howle in vaine
and wish you had a Barnauelt againe. [p.68, fol.24a]

While this entire section is marked for deletion, as was considered necessary because of James's identification with Octavius, presented here as an oppressor who destroyed the ancient freedom of Rome because of his desire for power, the passage also contains specific omissions and substitutions in Buc's handwriting, which draw attention to the most contentious aspects of the speech. These deletions are indicated above with square brackets. Significantly, they all relate to drama's ability to comment upon contemporary politics and the Stuart monarchy, and by removing, for example, the phrase 'you can apply this', as well as the negative reflection on monarchy as a form of government, the deletions seem designed to limit the potential this dramatization of current events has for domestic application.

Heinemann, responding to *Barnavelt's* censorship, has argued that the period between 1620 and 1623 witnessed limited overt criticism or subversion until open hostility towards Spain emerged following the return of Charles and Buckingham from the Spanish court, culminating, theatrically, with the performance and publication of *A Game at Chess*.⁴⁴ While these two plays are especially significant for understanding the development of historical dramatizations, other plays engaged with topical applications, including Drue's *Duchess of Suffolk* from Palsgrave's Men, which was also censored. On 2 January 1624, the Master of

⁴⁴ Heinemann, 'Drama', p.240.

the Revels, Henry Herbert, recorded in his accounts that Drue's play 'being full of dangerous matter was much reformed'.⁴⁵ While *The Duchess of Suffolk* does not represent such recent developments as *Barnavelt* or *A Game at Chess*, instead presenting events from the reign of Mary I and drawing on Foxe's accounts of Protestant martyrs, it engages with the anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic sentiment that also features in *Barnavelt* and *A Game at Chess*, and relates to the mounting tensions surrounding the eruption of religious conflict in Europe. Not printed until 1631 (although it was 'allowed to be printed' on 2 July 1624), *The Duchess of Suffolk* dramatizes the life of Katherine Brandon (1519-1580), a noblewoman at the courts of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I, who was an outspoken supporter of the Reformation and fled abroad during the reign of Mary I.⁴⁶ Accounts of her European travels are presented in, for example, Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. While the play is structurally and thematically similar to the early Jacobean 'elect nation' plays, including *When You See Me You Know Me* and *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (discussed in Chapter 3), *The Duchess of Suffolk* invests an older dramatic approach with topical relevance, given the European setting of its religious conflicts, and encourages an association with the unfolding crises of the Thirty Years' War.⁴⁷

Records of lost plays also indicate the continuing presence of topical material on stage. The gathered accounts and transcripts of Henry Herbert's papers as Master of the Revels reveal that a range of plays dramatizing contemporary events and individuals was performed on the London stages between 1623 and 1624, which coincided with a frenzy of Protestant pamphlets. The topicality of these plays is suggested by the evidence of their titles, which draw attention to events and issues relating to Spain and the Thirty Years' War, as well as to colonial expansion, including, in 1623, 'Spanish Duke of Lerma' from the King's Men, and 'A Tragedy of the Plantation of Virginia', probably from Prince Charles's Company; in 1624,

⁴⁵ N.W. Bawcutt (ed.), *The Control and Censorship of Caroline Drama: The Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels 1623-73* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p.148.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.153.

⁴⁷ See Spikes, pp.117-49 (especially pp.143-44); Clare, pp.189-90.

‘Fair Star of Antwerp’ from Palsgrave’s Men, ‘The Spanish Contract’ from Lady Elizabeth’s Men, ‘The Spanish Viceroy’ from the King’s Men, and Dekker’s ‘Gustavus, King of Swedland’ from an unknown company; and in 1625, ‘Amboyna’, also from an unknown company.⁴⁸ *Barnavelt* and *A Game at Chess* remain the most significant exempla of the dramatization of current events, owing to the sensitive material they present and the fact that full texts survive. However, interest in the presentation of state matters and consequential international conflicts persists in other dramatic and non-dramatic texts throughout the late Jacobean period and in tandem with greater attempts at the suppression of open discussion.

While representations of recent domestic events and individuals in professional plays did not reach quite the same level of directness after *Barnavelt* (at least until *A Game at Chess* in 1624), the exploration of contemporary issues, in particular, James’s proclivity towards adopting court favourites and the undue influence they appeared to exert over domestic and foreign policy, played a prominent role on the professional stages. Although initially incurring censorship, Fletcher and Massinger’s *Barnavelt* was able to present contemporary figures and events on stage, with its continental setting, gesture of removal from the English court, and its ‘quota of orthodox declamation’, which Janet Clare sees as characterizing drama of this period.⁴⁹ Representations of the Jacobean court and their wider relation to the cause of international Protestantism required a degree of covertness, and, after *Barnavelt*’s censorship, dramatizations of more distant historical pasts tended to be opted for, as they had in earlier periods. During the 1620s, however, these dramatizations attempted greater transparency, even as they represented distant histories.

For example, Fletcher and Massinger’s *The False One*, first performed in about 1620 but not printed until 1647 (as part of the Beaumont and Fletcher folio), draws on Lucan’s *Pharsalia* and the events of 48 BC, dramatizing the early story of Cleopatra and Julius Caesar. The play

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.140-62. See *LPD* for further details on the plays’ probable subjects.

⁴⁹ Clare, p.214.

focuses on Ptolemy, Cleopatra's younger brother, who has sequestered Cleopatra and assumed sole rule of Egypt, but has effectively resigned his government to the influence of malignant councillors, which suggests an immediate parallel with James I and the printed and manuscript materials that were circulating widely. Ptolemy's acquiescence in the murder of Pompey the Great and the involvement of Lucius Septimus as the Roman officer responsible for his death receive considerable attention in the play, and provide another parallel with James's role in the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh, which he effected in order to placate the Spanish. Septimus recalls Raleigh's principal accuser, Sir Lewis Stucley, who was vilified by Raleigh's supporters and became a 'target for national discontent'.⁵⁰ As Hila argues, 'although *The False One* is not a transparent political allegory, it deploys correspondences with the political reality known to theatre-goers': the influence of pernicious courtiers and favourites recalls James's increasing dependency on Buckingham, Ptolemy's pursuit of peace at any cost parallels James's pacifist position, and the play's description of Rome employs terms that were used by contemporary writers to refer to Spain.⁵¹

The prologue to *The False One* announces this potential for topical application and the ways in which a discerning listener or reader may position their interpretations:

New Titles, warrant not a Play for new,
The subject being old: and 'tis as true,
Fresh, and neate matter may with ease be fram'd
Out of their Stories, that have oft been nam'd
With glory on the Stage:
[...] sure, to tell
Of Caesars amorous heates, and how he fell
In the Capitoll, can never be the same
To the Judicious.⁵²

The prologue outlines the distant and frequently used history that forms the play's subject, but also draws attention to its relevance for a Jacobean audience; the play presents material that

⁵⁰ Mary Wolfe, 'Stucley, Sir Lewis (1574/5–1620)', *ODNB*, para.3.

⁵¹ Hila, p.21.

⁵² *The False One* in Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *Comedies and Tragedies* (Wing B1581, 1647), Ss4r.

can ‘with ease be fram’d’ to offer a true, fresh, and neatly applicable account that will not escape the notice of ‘the Judicious’.

Indeed, the ability of professional drama to engage provocatively with contemporary issues without incurring the regular censorship of printed pamphlets was recognized by other writers, including Thomas Scott, who defended his own publications by referring to the liberties allowed in plays, where expectations of fictionality permitted the freer incorporation of historical individuals. In *Vox Regis*, published in 1624, Scott answers the accusations levelled against his pamphlet *Vox Populi*, including the objection that the material he presented ‘was a fiction, and therefore deserued censure’:

Why, who profest otherwise? was there any that published it for a certaine truth? Was it not called *Vox populi*, to note it onely probable, and possible, and likely, not historical? (I meane, for so much as concerned the Plot.) And might I not borrow a Spanish name or two, as well as French, or Italian, to grace this Comedie with stately Actors? Or must they onely be reserued for Kingly Tragedies? why not Gondomar, aswell as Hieronymo, or Duke d’Alva? And why not Philip, as well as Peter, or Alfonso, or Caesar?⁵³

In questioning the censure of his pamphlet, Scott draws attention to provocative theatrical representations, such as the potentially anti-Habsburg *Spanish Tragedy* (which had been reprinted in its ninth edition in 1623 and offered an unflattering representation of Spanish government) and other dramatic histories, including those featuring ‘Caesar’ (which might be applied to a number of plays), and ‘Peter’, which possibly indicates Don Pedro the Cruel of Castile, who was represented in *The Hector of Germany* (1615).⁵⁴ Scott suggests a continuum between his pamphlet’s representation of contemporary Spanish figures, including Gondomar and Philip III, and professional plays that deal with ancient and recent pasts, feature prominent historical figures, and represent issues of state. His assessment of the connections between dramatic and non-dramatic texts, and the histories favoured by the professional theatres

⁵³ *Vox Regis*, B1v.

⁵⁴ See Jane Pettegree’s *Foreign and Native on the English Stage, 1588-1611: Metaphor and National Identity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) for a discussion of anti-Spanish sentiment in Kyd’s play and the possibility that its publication history from c.1592 to 1623 could be connected to changing public opinion concerning Spain (p.138).

reflects the dominant characteristics of historical engagement during this period that this chapter aims to highlight.

Indeed, Scott's offending pamphlet, *Vox Populi*, which was printed in seven editions in 1620, draws on the conventions of both news reports and plays, and furthers the connection between these forms that was outlined earlier in the chapter. Subtitled 'Newes from Spayne', *Vox Populi* purports to be an account of Spanish court proceedings 'according to the true Spanish coppie', but is also presented as a dramatic dialogue, featuring Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador in England, who is systematically ridiculed throughout.⁵⁵ Scott's defence highlights his pamphlet's connection with theatrical conventions and the expectation of fictionality commensurate with this medium. In doing so, he draws attention to the possibility for greater liberality in representations of historical people on stage than in non-dramatic accounts. Indeed, Scott's *Vox Populi* and *The Second Part of Vox Populi* were among Middleton's sources for *A Game at Chess*, which allegorizes Gondomar as the Black Knight; although the play was censored, those involved in its production ultimately escaped punishment. During the 1620s, as Salzman observes, an increasing range of literature encouraged 'political reading'.⁵⁶ History plays occupied a prominent position in the pursuit of contemporary parallels and they incurred less severe censorship than non-dramatic publications, which may be partly connected to a patronage link between the King's Men and the Herbert family.

The King's Men, the Herberts, and *A Game at Chess*

Pursuing topical applications with a more insistent directness emerges as an important feature of historical dramatizations during the late Jacobean period and, between 1619 and 1625, the King's Men feature centrally in the performance and publication patterns of these texts. Most extant history plays, including *Barnaveit* (performed 1619, published 1883), *Thierry and*

⁵⁵ *Vox Populi*, A1r.

⁵⁶ Salzman, p.1.

Theodoret (performed c.1617, published 1621), *The False One* (performed c.1620, published 1647), *The Duke of Milan* (performed c.1621, published 1623), and *A Game at Chess* (performed 1624, published 1625), originated with this company.⁵⁷ This concentration is partly a result of the position of the King's Men as the most prominent and stable professional company during the late Jacobean period, given the difficulties experienced by the other main companies under James, namely Queen Anne's Men and Palsgrave's Men. In 1619, Queen Anne died, leaving her company without a formally identified patron or official name. They are usually described as the Red Bull Company during this period, owing to their regular performance venue. No further record of the company in London exists after 1622, and in this year, three of their plays were printed, suggesting the sale of company assets.⁵⁸ Similarly, Palsgrave's, or the Palatine's, Men (formerly the Admiral's and Prince Henry's Men) experienced irrevocable losses after the Fortune theatre burned down on 9 December 1621, destroying 'all their apparell and play-bookes' and rendering the company 'quite undone', as John Chamberlain reports in a letter to Dudley Carleton on 15 December.⁵⁹ While the Fortune was rebuilt and the company attempted to replace their repertory losses, as shown by Henry Herbert's records which indicate that thirteen new plays and a masque were bought by the company between July 1623 and November 1624, their position never fully recovered, few of their plays were published, and the company effectively disbanded, some players regrouping with Lady Elizabeth's Men in 1626 to form the King and Queen of Bohemia's Men.⁶⁰

In this context, the King's Men emerge as the most stable theatrical company of the late Jacobean period, and the performance and publication patterns associated with the company indicate a continued focus on history plays and, in particular, those which dramatized recent events, such as *Barnavelt* and *A Game at Chess*. Despite James's increased efforts to curtail

⁵⁷ Approximate dates of performance are taken from *DEEP*. Particular uncertainty surrounds the first performance of *Thierry and Theodoret*.

⁵⁸ Gurr, *SPC*, pp.327-28. The three first editions printed in 1622 are Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*, Gervase Markham and William Sampson's *Herod and Antipater*, and Thomas May's *The Heir*.

⁵⁹ McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, II, pp.414-15.

⁶⁰ Bawcutt (ed.), pp.141-58.

topical debates in both speech and writing, the plays from the King's Men respond directly to contemporary politics, and the circumstances of their production suggest the close involvement of the Herbert family, which raises the possibility of an associative network between the company and an aristocratic patron.

Extant records suggest that, during the late Jacobean period, the King's Men were connected to the Herbert family, specifically, William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke and Lord Chamberlain from 1615 to 1626, his brother, Philip Herbert, earl of Montgomery (later fourth earl of Pembroke), and their kinsman, Henry Herbert, who was Master of the Revels from 1623 to 1642. The connection between the King's Men and the Herberts peaks between 1619 and 1625, largely coinciding with the chamberlainship of William Herbert, although evidence from letters and other records, as well as Philip Herbert's investiture as Lord Chamberlain in 1626, suggest continued associations during the Caroline period. William Herbert's direct involvement started in 1619, when he intervened in the publication of plays from the King's Men, asserting the rights of the company to control their printing, and, in a sense, reallocating the privileges normally allotted to stationers (a development which will be discussed later in this chapter).

Shortly after, in 1623, Henry Herbert became the Master of the Revels, responsible for licensing plays for performance and publication, and overseeing theatrical entertainment at court. Henry's acquisition of the Revels office occurred under slightly unusual circumstances that suggest the involvement of his kinsman, William Herbert. Sir John Astley had become Master of the Revels in March 1622, but on 24 July 1623, he appointed Henry as his deputy, effectively selling the post to Henry for £150 per annum and allowing Henry to benefit from 'the full dignity of the office from the outset'.⁶¹ As recorded in Henry Herbert's accounts, on 7 August 1623, James knighted Henry and 'was pleased likewise to bestowe many good words

⁶¹ Richard Dutton, 'Herbert, Sir Henry (*bap.* 1594, *d.* 1673)', *ODNB*, para.4.

upon me & to receive mee as Master of his Revells'.⁶² This event took place at Wilton, the home of William Herbert (hereafter Pembroke), which implies the chamberlain's influence in procuring the post for his kinsman.

One effect of these familial connections seems to be the promotion of the King's Men and the emergence of the Herberts as, in many ways, the *de facto* patrons of James's company. While Henry Herbert was involved in the licensing and censorship of plays from other companies in his role as Master of the Revels, including Drue's *Duchess of Suffolk* and Samuel Rowley's lost play 'A Tragedy of Richard the thirde, or the English Prophett' in 1623, both he and Pembroke seem to have protected the King's Men and promoted their position as the pre-eminent theatrical company in London.⁶³ Henry favoured the King's Men for court performances; by comparison, Palsgrave's Men and the Red Bull Company were never requested to perform at court after 1615 and 1617, respectively. Similarly, when the former Master of the Revels, John Astley, censored 'Osmond the Great Turk', a play from the King's Men in 1622, Pembroke, as Lord Chamberlain, intervened, allowing the play for the stage on 6 September, an event which may have led him to seek the appointment of Henry in the Revels office in 1623.⁶⁴

Although the Herbert family were important textual patrons (as discussed in relation to Philip Herbert in Chapter 3), the reasons for their involvement with the King's Men were probably connected to, or at least heightened by, political developments during the late Jacobean period, in particular, James's non-interventionist approach in relation to Spain and the wider European religious conflicts, together with a growing antagonism towards the dominance of court favourites, specifically Buckingham. Indeed, Pembroke was part of an anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic grouping of disaffected aristocratic peers, who advocated direct involvement in the

⁶² Bawcutt (ed.), pp.4-5.

⁶³ See 'Richard III, or the English Prophet' in *LPD*.

⁶⁴ Bawcutt (ed.), p.34.

Thirty Years' War and resistance to the proposed Spanish match between Prince Charles and the Infanta Maria. As Victor Stater points out, Pembroke sought to limit Spanish influence 'at home and abroad', and as 'an early investor in colonial enterprises – Pembroke was the Virginia Company's second-largest investor – he put money into many other schemes that would curb Spanish power.'⁶⁵

Pembroke's politics were recognized by his contemporaries: he was a popular figure in parliament, where his anti-Spanish views found support from many of its members, and he argued against parliament's dissolution in December 1621, by opposing Prince Charles and Buckingham.⁶⁶ As Stater observes, Pembroke had considerable power both in the Commons and the House of Lords: his properties afforded him extensive control over several seats in the Commons, and although 'the number of members identified with him varied from parliament to parliament', in the Commons 'it was never less than a dozen, rising to over thirty at times', and in the House of Lords, he rarely had fewer than five proxies and occasionally had as many as ten.⁶⁷ Pembroke's influence and political leanings were also acknowledged in print. He was the dedicatee of several publications promoting a militant Protestant agenda, including *A Gag for the Pope and the Jesuits* (1624), which, in its dedicatory epistle, specifies that the pamphlet's objectives are supported by 'so noble an arme' as the earl of Pembroke's:

[B]ut aboue all, my motiues arise from your Noble disposition towards Englands glory, and pious zeale to propagate the cause of Religion, which at this day is set vpon by viperous calumniation, as if either God meant not to performe his promise, concerning the stripping of the Strumpet naked.⁶⁸

Pembroke was also involved as an actor in aristocratic theatrical performances that drew attention to their political topicality, most significantly in the Windsor production of Ben Jonson's masque, *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*, in 1621.⁶⁹ A song from this masque ('From

⁶⁵ Victor Stater, 'Herbert, William, third earl of Pembroke (1580-1630)', *ODNB*, para.19.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, para.20.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Anon., *A Gagge for the Pope and the Iesvits* (STC 20111, 1624), A2v-A3r.

⁶⁹ Salzman, pp.20-22.

a gypsy in the morning') proved amenable to appropriation, in one instance being adapted into a politically daring poem, often referred to as 'The Five Senses', which was widely read and circulated in manuscript. The authorship of 'The Five Senses' is uncertain, but it was written at some point between the first performance of the masque in summer 1621 and early summer 1623, when John Rous had secured a copy (BL Add. MS 28640).⁷⁰ The poem offers a critique of late Jacobean court politics, dominated by royal favourites, who 'May prove the ruine of a land', and expresses concern over 'the daingerous figg of Spaine' and the 'Spanish treaties that may wound | Our Countries peace', in this way reflecting the political views of Pembroke and other disaffected nobles alarmed by royal foreign policy.⁷¹

While plays from the professional theatre companies cannot be narrowly described as mouthpieces for their patrons or the other aristocrats with whom they became associated, particularly as a range of influences shaped the presentation of plays in what was ultimately an economically-driven commercial environment, the coincidence of a number of developments and individuals suggests that plays were regularly being used to comment on political events and debates during the late Jacobean period. As Gurr observes, by 1620, 'plays had become substantial enough as a presence in London's society to warrant their being used for propaganda, to register political sentiment and give serious publicity to the issues and to opinions about the issues'.⁷² The Herberts were perhaps the most significant aristocratic family who recognized the utility of professional plays for exploring contemporary issues, while also protecting the players and their dramatists, as can be witnessed in the events surrounding *A Game at Chess*.

⁷⁰ Anon., 'From such a face whose Excellence' (L8), in *Early Stuart Libels*, ed. by Bellany and McRae. (The poem is referred to by its first line.)

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, lines 6, 19-20, 36. Cf. Andrew McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.75-82.

⁷² Gurr, *SPC*, p.133.

Middleton's *A Game at Chess* was performed by the King's Men at the Globe from 5 to 14 August 1624, and ran for an unprecedented nine consecutive performances, before it was suppressed by an order of the Privy Council. Engaging with some of the major political debates and events from 1620 to 1624 through its political, moral, and religious allegorical identifications, the play effectively presented contemporary English and Spanish royal figures and courtiers on stage, including James I, Prince Charles, Buckingham, the Conde de Gondomar, and Marc Antonio De Dominis, Archbishop of Spalato. A letter from John Holles, Lord Haughton, to the earl of Somerset on 11 August 1624, provides an account of the play in performance:

The whole play is a chess board, England the whyt hows, Spayn the black: one of the white pawns, with an vnder black dubblett, signifying a Spanish hart, betrays his party to their aduantage, aduanceth Gundomars propositions, works vnder hand the Princes cumming into Spayn.⁷³

As indicated by Holles, Middleton's play dramatizes key events from the domestic and foreign political crises of the late Jacobean period, but presents them through a thinly-veiled allegory of a chess game in which the characters are assigned the names of chess pieces, the black and white houses representing Spain and England, respectively, and battling for dominance and control. Middleton drew on the political pamphlets of Thomas Scott, including the two parts of *Vox Populi* (1620, 1624), as well as John Reynold's *Vox Coeli* (1624), presenting a play of factional conflicts, and engaging with events surrounding the Spanish match and the widespread expression of anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic viewpoints following Charles and Buckingham's return from Spain.⁷⁴

Other contemporary accounts all testify to the pronounced topical application and significance of the play. In a letter to Dudley Carleton on 21 August 1624, John Chamberlain writes, 'I doubt not but you have heard of our famous play of Gondomar, which hath ben followed with extraordinarie concourse, and frequented by all sorts of people', drawing attention to the

⁷³ Thomas Middleton, *A Game at Chess*, ed. by T.H. Howard-Hill, Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp.198-99.

⁷⁴ Limon, p.8.

play's political allegory by using the former Spanish ambassador's name as an adopted title (he is represented in the character of the Black Knight). Indeed, when the play was performed, the Spanish Ambassador, Don Carlos Coloma, reacted immediately: he issued a complaint to James on 7 August, and requested the 'authors and actors [...] be punished in a public and exemplary fashion'.⁷⁵ The final repercussions for those involved in *A Game at Chess* were not, however, especially stringent or exemplary. As instructed by Conway, the Privy Council initially prohibited the King's Men from further playing (preventing a planned performance on 16 August), had them enter into a £300 bond 'not to Play Gundomar or any other till they know his Maiesties farther pleasure', and arranged for the King's Men to be brought before the Privy Council for examination.⁷⁶ However, even Don Carlos Coloma suspected that this restraining of the players was more superficial and the consequences for their actions would not be extreme or enduring:

It remains to be seen whether the punishment that will be given to the actors and author of the play will prove that the [King's] indignation against them is genuine. The fact is that this play has run for nine days, to the general applause of bad men and to the grief of those whose intentions are sound, who already thought that we had sufficient cause for complaint in the barbarism and vile behaviour of these people without this additional insult.⁷⁷

When representatives from the King's Men were brought before the Privy Council on 18 August, they claimed they had performed nothing more than had been allowed by Henry Herbert, and produced the book of the play 'being an orriginall and perfect Coppie thereof [...] scene and allowed by Sir Henry Herbert knight, Master of the Reuells, vnder his owne hand, and subscribed in the last Page'.⁷⁸ In response, the Privy Council wrote to Conway, explaining the position of the players and requesting that Conway or some other representative 'call Sir Henry Herbert before you to know a reason of his lycenceing thereof, who (as we are

⁷⁵ Noted by Malone in his copy of Q3, Bodleian Library Mal.247: "'A new play called *A Game at Chess*, written by Middleton" was licensed by Sir Henry Herbert, June 12 1624. So his Office Book ms'. See Middleton, *Chess*, pp.192-93.

⁷⁶ John Woolley to William Trumbull (20 August 1624); Middleton, *Chess*, p.203.

⁷⁷ Don Carlos Coloma to the Conde-Duque Olivares (18 August 1624); Middleton, *Chess*, pp.202-03.

⁷⁸ Herbert had licensed the play on 12 June 1624. Middleton, *Chess*, p.204.

giuen to vnderstand) is now attending at Court'.⁷⁹ As far as the extant documents show, Herbert received no official sanction, reprimand or damage to his reputation and position as the Master of the Revels, and it may be significant that he was absent from London during the extended run of the play.⁸⁰ Indeed, other contemporaries, such as John Woolley (in his letter to Trumbull), recognized the probable involvement of powerful authorities, and intimated that the play's allowance by the Master of the Revels was 'not without leaue, from the higher powers I meane the P[rince] and D[uke of Buckingham] if not from the K[ing] for they were all loth to haue it forbidden, and by report laught hartely at it', which suggests a shift in official policy following Charles and Buckingham's return from Spain and the collapse of the Spanish match negotiations.⁸¹

The involvement of William Herbert is also a likely reason for the ready licensing and treatment of *A Game at Chess*, as the political positioning of the play accords with Pembroke's stance on matters such as the Spanish match and his pursuit of a militant approach in the cause of Protestant protectionism. Pembroke had not been present at the Privy Council meeting on 18 August, when the operations of the King's Men were suppressed, but he subsequently worked for their liberation from performance restrictions and the tempering of the severe and exemplary punishments requested by Don Carlos Coloma. On 27 August, Pembroke wrote to the president of the Privy Council, Viscount Mandeville, observing that the King's Men had been obedient in response to the complaint and had suffered a sufficient punishment through the cessation of playing, which 'stopps the Current of their poore livelyhood and maintenaunce without much preiudice they Cannot longer vndergoe'.⁸² Pembroke directly requests that the King's Men be allowed to resume playing, providing they refrain from acting *A Game at*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.205.

⁸⁰ Herbert was 'attending at Court', according to a Privy Council letter to Sir Edward Conway, dated 21 August 1624. *Ibid.*, pp.204-05.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.203.

⁸² Letter from William Herbert, earl of Pembroke, to Viscount Mandeville (27 August 1624) in BL Egerton MS 2623, fol.28.

Chess, and assures Mandeville that the play was ‘antiquated and sylenced’.⁸³ Both of these terms are particularly striking, alongside Pembroke’s confident declaration of the company’s contrition. Pembroke claims *A Game at Chess* is essentially obsolete, despite its heightened importance and notoriety at this time, and his perspective is unique amongst contemporary accounts. His defence of the King’s Men repositions the recent debates and issues allegorized in *A Game at Chess* as part of an antiquated past, and promotes a distancing and neutralizing interpretation that aligns the play with the dramatization of older histories. Indeed, Pembroke’s strategy draws attention to the conceptual continuum between recent events and the distant past that this chapter aims to highlight.

As a consequence of Pembroke’s intervention, the King’s Men were permitted to resume playing, and, on 28 August, John Woolley reported ‘(how true it is I know not) that the Players are gone to the Courte to Act the game at Chesse before the Kinge, which doth much truble the spanish Ambassador’.⁸⁴ Despite the official investigation and suppression of the play, the reactions of the king and privy councillors seem to have been relatively restrained or, at least, primarily placatory towards the offended Spanish ambassador, while Pembroke’s intervention, together with Henry Herbert’s initial licensing, suggest direct support for this particular play and the political interpretation it encourages in the context of its first performances. Pembroke may not have sponsored the composition and performance of *A Game at Chess*, as Heinemann has suggested, but it seems likely that the King’s Men were counting on their connection to the Herberts affording them some degree of protection should the play incur censorship.⁸⁵ The very fact the company chose to perform *A Game at Chess* on consecutive days indicates they were capitalizing on its success and application with the expectation that suppression was imminent. Indeed, as T.H. Howard-Hill points out, the King’s Men were ‘unabashed by their treatment’, even referring to the scandal in the prologue

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Middleton, *Chess*, p.207.

⁸⁵ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp.165-69.

to Fletcher's *Rule a Wife*, which was licensed on 19 October and performed at court on 2 November 1624.⁸⁶

Although the King's Men were later condemned by Henry Herbert in 1624 for attempting another topical (and now lost) play called 'The Spanish Viceroy', this time without his licence, the *Game at Chess* debacle and the evidence of other connections between the Herberts and the King's Men suggest a close association between the company and this aristocratic family between 1619 and 1625, which is further supported when looking at playbooks from the King's Men.⁸⁷ Despite the company's stability and prominence, few of their plays were published individually in the late Jacobean period. The complete list of extant, single-text first editions from the King's Men consists of *The Maid's Tragedy* (1619), *A King and No King* (1619), *Philaster* (1620), *Thierry and Theodoret* (1621), *Othello* (1622), *The Duke of Milan* (1623), *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623), and *A Game at Chess* (1625). A letter written by Pembroke in 1619, which is no longer extant but survives as a summary in the court documents of the Stationers' Company, suggests a reason for this disparity. These records specify that 'vppon a letter from the right honourable the Lord Chamberleyne, It is thought fitt & so ordered That no playes that his Majesties players do play shalbe printed without consent of somme of them'.⁸⁸ From this summary, it is clear that Pembroke was attempting to restrict the printing and/or publication of plays on behalf of the King's Men, and that the Stationers' Company cooperated and issued an order to that effect. While earlier attempts at publication control can be witnessed in the Stationers' Register, as in the staying entry on 4 August 1600 for *As You Like It*, *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Every Man in His Humour* (discussed in Chapter 2), Pembroke's request suggests a more widespread and enveloping

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁸⁷ Bawcutt (ed.), p.183.

⁸⁸ William Jackson (ed.), *Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company, 1602 to 1640* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1957), p.110.

attempt at control, and its efficacy can be seen in the limited numbers of single-text first editions from the King's Men immediately following this letter.⁸⁹

Crucially, as Massai has argued, this 1619 order was aimed at the publication of first editions from the King's Men, rather than, as other textual scholars have suggested, both first editions and reprints.⁹⁰ Critics, including Lukas Erne and Andrew Murphy, have argued that Thomas Pavier's publication (or projected publication) in 1619 of ten 'Shakespearian' plays (all of which had already been printed) possibly motivated the court order and that the King's Men were attempting to restrict Pavier's enterprise and reassert their control over previously-published plays.⁹¹ However, nothing in the surviving documents relating to the 1619 order, or the later interventions of Philip Herbert in 1637 and Robert Devereux in 1641, suggest that these efforts applied to reprinted editions, the rights for which were already assigned to specific stationers.

The publication of these editions and their coincidence with Pembroke's 1619 injunction requires further consideration, especially because of several intriguing textual features. Many of these playbooks contain false dates and imprints, which suggests an attempt to deceive at least some of the individuals who encountered the editions by obscuring their publication details. Indeed, it was not until W.W. Greg's seminal essay 'On Certain False Dates in Shakespearian Quartos' in 1908 that these editions were identified as a connected group that had, in fact, been printed in 1619, rather than on the various dates indicated by their title pages.⁹² Greg showed that these plays had been printed on the same mixed stock of paper and were therefore of the same date. The playbooks have since become known as the 'Pavier Quartos' because Thomas Pavier (or 'T.P.') is presented as the publisher in the imprints of

⁸⁹ See *Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers*, Liber C, flyleaf.

⁹⁰ Massai, *Editor*, pp.106-35.

⁹¹ Erne, *Literary Dramatist*, p.256; Murphy, p.40.

⁹² 'On Certain False Dates in Shakespearian Quartos', *The Library*, 34 (1908), 113-31.

five editions.⁹³ A well-established bookseller, Pavier possibly invested in all of the texts, carrying the financial risk for the publication of the following ten plays, issued as nine playbooks: *The Whole Contention* (containing *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York*), *Pericles*, *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *King Lear*, *Henry V*, *Sir John Oldcastle* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It is also clear, from the continuous signatures that appear in *The Whole Contention* and *Pericles*, that the plays were (initially) intended to form a collection, and that Shakespeare was being advertised as the main author.⁹⁴ All but one of the editions contain title-page attributions to Shakespeare (including *The Yorkshire Tragedy* and *Oldcastle*, two plays which are not thought to be by Shakespeare); the title page of *Henry V* does not make any reference to authorship (following the pattern of its earlier printed editions in 1600 and 1602), but the play was connected with Shakespeare during his lifetime and appeared in Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623 (albeit in a different textual state).⁹⁵ Recent work by Zachary Lesser and Peter Stallybrass has drawn attention to the absence of stab-stitch holes in many of the surviving copies of these editions (which suggests that the plays were bound together as a collection in Pavier's bookshop, rather than being loosely stitched together in preparation for being bound by individual readers).⁹⁶ Lesser and Stallybrass, and Jeffrey Todd Knight have also shown that the 'third' edition of Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, printed and published in 1617 by William and Isaac Jaggard (who also printed all of the 'Pavier Quartos'), was probably part of this collection, owing to the absence of stab-stitch holes and the 'ghost image' of its title-page that appears on the final verso of the Huntington Library's copy of *Henry V*, which implies that they were bound together in the seventeenth

⁹³ The five editions which advertise Pavier's involvement as publisher are: *The Whole Contention*, *Pericles*, *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, *Henry V*, and *Sir John Oldcastle*. The imprints describe these plays as 'Printed for T.P.'

⁹⁴ See Zachary Lesser and Peter Stallybrass, 'Shakespeare between pamphlet and book, 1608-1619', in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Kidnie and Massai, pp.105-33 (pp.121-22).

⁹⁵ *The Yorkshire Tragedy* was issued with an attribution to Shakespeare when it was first printed in 1608. The attribution on the title-page of *Oldcastle* is a new addition, and, as John Jowett considers, the accompanying false date (1600) may be an attempt to strengthen the Shakespearian attribution. See Jowett, 'Shakespeare Supplemented' in Douglas Brooks and Ann Thompson (eds.), *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, *The Shakespeare Yearbook*, 16 (2007), 39-75 (p.45).

⁹⁶ Lesser and Stallybrass, 'Shakespeare', pp.119-33.

century.⁹⁷ These eleven plays represent ‘the first attempt by a publisher to sell a bound book composed exclusively of plays from the professional theatres’, and even with the Heywood addition, they form a largely ‘Shakespearian’ collection of previously-printed plays, most of which had been performed by the King’s Men.⁹⁸

The Pavier quartos represent a significant publishing enterprise, and the false dates and imprints contained on their title pages seem connected to the 1619 court injunction, and the efforts of the King’s Men (with the assistance of the Herberts) to control the circulation of their plays in print.⁹⁹ There is clearly some attempt to deceive: five editions contain false dates, one contains no publication date, and at least two display false publication details.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the abandoning of continuous signatures after *The Whole Contention* and *Pericles* (together with evidence for the separation of these plays in bound copies from the seventeenth century) reveals an effort to conceal the fact that these plays were all printed in 1619 and by the same stationers (William and Isaac Jaggard, whose names, intriguingly, do not appear on any of the editions).¹⁰¹ These actions would seem to be tactics to evade censure for some publication infringement. Indeed, critics, beginning with Greg, have suggested that Pavier did not hold the copyright to these editions and that he was attempting to deceive his fellow stationers by incorporating false publication details.¹⁰² However, as William Jackson has argued, the quartos do not imitate the typographical features of the earlier editions, which

⁹⁷ Lesser and Stallybrass, ‘Shakespeare’, pp.126-30. Jeffrey Todd Knight, ‘Invisible Ink: A Note on Ghost Images in Early Printed Books’, *Textual Cultures*, 5:2 (2009), 53-62. The 1617 quarto of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* is the second extant edition of the play, but its title page describes it as the ‘third edition’, which suggests an earlier one has been lost.

⁹⁸ Lesser and Stallybrass, ‘Shakespeare’, p.130.

⁹⁹ See John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.70-72.

¹⁰⁰ The five plays with false dates are *Henry V* (‘1608’), *Sir John Oldcastle* (‘1600’), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (‘1600’), *The Merchant of Venice* (‘1600’), and *King Lear* (‘1608’); *The Whole Contention* is undated. False imprints are found in: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (‘Printed by James Roberts’) and *The Merchant of Venice* (‘Printed by J. Roberts’), which were actually printed, along with all the other editions, by the Jaggards. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is ‘Printed for Arthur Johnson’ and *King Lear* is ‘Printed for Nathaniel Butter’; both Johnson and Butter may have been involved in or cooperated with the publication of these texts, and these imprints are not necessarily false.

¹⁰¹ Lesser and Stallybrass, ‘Shakespeare’, pp.123-31.

¹⁰² Greg, ‘Certain False Dates’, p.128.

suggests they cannot have been seriously intended to trick other stationers.¹⁰³ Moreover, Pavier did in fact hold the rights to five of the editions and possibly collaborated with other stationers in the remaining editions for which the copyright was not derelict.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, it is unlikely that the false publication details represent an attempt to circumvent the 1619 court injunction, as, again, the quartos' typographic presentation is not especially convincing or consistent, and there is no evidence to suggest Pavier experienced any negative repercussions when the editions appeared. The publication of reprinted editions continued at a relatively consistent rate for the rest of the Jacobean period, revealing that first editions were the likely target of Pembroke's action.

One possibility, however, is that Pavier was concerned about the 1619 injunction and its *potential* application to his new publishing project, which caused him to change his approach to the collection midway through. Pavier may have abandoned the continuous signatures after *The Whole Contention* and *Pericles*, and started to incorporate false dates and publication details because he was uncertain about what this new intervention into stationer privileges by the Lord Chamberlain actually entailed. However, this theory does not explain why some of the texts (specifically, *The Yorkshire Tragedy* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*) display the correct dates in their title-page imprints.

The most convincing explanation is offered by Massai, who proposes that Pavier's project aimed to produce a nonce collection, in which a selection of previously published texts was reprinted and gathered together 'in order to whet, rather than satisfy, readers' demand for a new collection of Shakespeare's dramatic works'.¹⁰⁵ Lesser and Stallybrass reach a similar conclusion about the appearance of the editions, suggesting they would have resembled *Sammelbände*, or collections of texts put together by readers after their sale.¹⁰⁶ As Massai

¹⁰³ 'Counterfeit Printing in Jacobean Times', *The Library*, 15 (1935), 364-76.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Massai, *Editor*, pp.113-14.

¹⁰⁵ Massai, *Editor*, pp.107-08.

¹⁰⁶ Lesser and Stallybrass, 'Shakespeare', p.131.

argues, the project worked by ‘significantly reviving the fortunes of Shakespeare in print’; few of Shakespeare’s plays had been published in the years immediately preceding 1619.¹⁰⁷ Pavier’s venture perhaps stimulated readers’ renewed interest in plays from the professional stages (and Shakespeare’s in particular) and paved the way for the First Folio, the first collected edition of professional plays by a single (advertised) dramatist, and in which the Jaggards were also involved as printer-publishers.¹⁰⁸ The 1619 editions, which were sold singly and in collection, were perhaps intended to make readers believe they were buying older editions alongside new editions of previously-printed plays, and that these texts were part of an emerging canon of classic plays from the professional stages.

A significant number of these plays dramatize historical events and individuals; although the selection of texts was likely determined by copyright issues and cooperation with other stationers, such Butter (in connection to *King Lear*), it is significant that, in this first printed collection of professional plays, historical drama should feature so prominently. Indeed, the two parts of *Henry VI* received a new printed presentation through this venture: *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* were issued as one playbook, titled *The Whole Contention Between the Two Famous Houses, Lancaster and York*. The title page describes the plays as ‘newly corrected and enlarged’, and, indeed, one of the significant alterations was the correction of the historical lineage described by York in the earlier editions of *The First Part of the Contention*.¹⁰⁹ It is not clear who was responsible for correcting the historical inaccuracies, but Massai has argued persuasively for Pavier’s involvement, given his practices with other publications and the nature of further amendments throughout the play.¹¹⁰ While there is much that remains obscure about the publication of these quartos (including whether Pavier or the Jaggards were the main agents shaping the enterprise), these playbooks nevertheless are part of an innovative publishing endeavour that offered a largely

¹⁰⁷ Massai, *Editor*, p.119.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Massai, *Editor*, pp.116-18.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *The First Part of the Contention* (Q1 1594, C4r-v) with *The Whole Contention* (C4r-v).

¹¹⁰ Massai, *Editor*, pp.126-28.

Shakespearian collection of professional plays to readers, most of which featured historical subject matter. Moreover, the title page of *The Whole Contention* contained the (new) attribution ‘Written by William Shakespeare, Gent’, which marks the first time Shakespeare had been described (and advertised) as a gentleman on a title page.¹¹¹ It is possible that the success of these reprinted editions reignited readers’ interest in Shakespeare and in historical drama, after a period of decreased publication during the 1610s. In fact, the 1619 injunction could be seen as an unantagonistic response to the success of the Pavier/Jaggard quartos: the King’s Men may have decided to protect their unpublished plays after the reprinted editions proved successful (and possibly inspired the publication of the First Folio).

Regardless of the precise circumstances surrounding the publication of the Pavier/Jaggard quartos, an analysis of the extant evidence demonstrates that Pembroke’s 1619 intervention was aimed at new first editions from the King’s Men and not at all editions. The injunction represents the initiation of a process whereby the Lord Chamberlain, in association with the King’s Men, started to reallocate stationer privileges for first editions. Previously, publishers occupied one of the positions of greatest agency in the selection and presentation of plays from the professional theatres in print. As featured in this study, the publishing outputs of Thomas Creede, Andrew Wise, and Nathaniel Butter suggest that these stationers acquired and propagated a range of commercial plays according to their own publishing agendas and specialisms. However, during the late Jacobean period (and continuing into the Caroline period), the involvement of theatrical companies, patrons, and dramatists in the publication of first-edition history plays becomes much more prominent, a development that can be witnessed through the consistent and elaborate paratextual materials (incorporating dedicatory epistles, commendatory verses, and addresses to the reader) that are regularly affixed to

¹¹¹ *The Whole Contention* ([1619], STC 26101), A1r. This title-page attribution also represents the first time that *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* were attributed to Shakespeare in print.

playbooks from the Caroline period onwards and which draw attention to the important role played by these additional agents.

In particular, the King's Men were actively involved, during the late Jacobean period, in the publication and circulation of specific plays from their repertory, including *A Game at Chess*, which was printed in three editions in c.1625 and also circulated in manuscript. Owing to the furore caused by its performance in August 1624, there was considerable demand for copies of the play, and after its theatrical suppression, *A Game at Chess* was perceived as a play to be read and engaged with on the page. The role of manuscript circulation was significant in this propagation, which, given the play's performance censorship, perhaps heightened the sense of its exclusivity and position as a proscribed play, although no attempts were made to control its circulation as a written text. Middleton was himself connected to the manuscript production, and his handwriting appears in three of the six surviving manuscripts (one of which is entirely in his hand), dated between 13 August 1624 and 1 January 1625.¹¹²

Expanding its reach and readership, the play was probably printed later in 1625; the three quarto editions lack any reference to the publisher, printer, dramatist, or place and date of publication (a precautionary measure frequently deployed in topical pamphlets and news accounts). Recent work on the extant texts and their transmission has demonstrated that the quartos were printed in London by Augustine Matthews, Edward Allde, and Nicholas Okes.¹¹³ While the quartos were unlicensed by the Stationers' Company and were not reviewed by official authorizers, there is no evidence to suggest the texts were suppressed. As Clegg proposes, there may have been 'some sort of unexpressed compact among Stationers to turn a

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp.2-9.

¹¹³ Of the three (undated) printed editions of *A Game at Chess*, Okes was responsible for two, usually designated Q1 (STC 17882) and Q2 (in two issues, STC 17883 and STC 17885). Augustine Mathewes and Edward Allde shared the printing of the so-called third quarto (STC 17884). See Gary Taylor, 'A Game at Chess: General Textual Introduction' in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.712-873 (especially pp.713-20).

blind eye to the secret publication of books that expressed political views many of them shared'.¹¹⁴ A connection to an aristocratic patron, such as Pembroke, may also have been a factor, especially as Pembroke was associated with Protestant politics and an antagonistic stance towards Spain.

The possibility of a publication connection between the King's Men and the Herbert family during the late Jacobean period is further supported by the choice of William and Philip Herbert as the dedicatees of Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623. On the surface, this dedicatory choice may appear unusual, especially because James himself would seem to be the most likely dedicatee for a collection of plays from his official company.¹¹⁵ However, as considered throughout this chapter, it is the Herbert family who occupied the most central and influential position in relation to the operation and protection of the King's Men, and James seems little more than a nominal patron.

The dedication, written by John Heminges and Henry Condell of the King's Men, emphasizes a particular closeness between 'the most noble and incomparable paire of brethren' and the king's company (A2r). While the Folio's praise of its dedicatees and modesty in its presentation of such 'trifles' to the Herberts reflect conventional approaches in prefatory epistles and do not necessarily indicate an actual connection between patron and company, other more specific references suggest an acknowledged and measurable closeness. Heminges and Condell describe the Folio as both choosing and finding its patrons, claiming that in the Herberts' 'likings of the seuerall parts, when they were acted, as before they were published, the Volume ask'd to be yours' (A2r-v). The Herberts are presented as being familiar with the plays and interested in their publication, and are positioned as recognizable theatrical and literary patrons of the King's Men and of Shakespeare in particular, having 'prosequuted both

¹¹⁴ Clegg, *Jacobean England*, p.189.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Sonia Massai, 'Edward Blount, the Herberts, and the First Folio', in *Shakespeare's Stationers*, ed. by Straznicky, pp.132-46 (p.138).

them, and their Author liuing, with so much fauour' (A2r). In one of the most ambitious publication ventures involving professional plays between 1619 and 1625, the Herbert brothers are directly and emphatically announced as associates of the King's Men, and the Folio dedication assigns them a nurturing and shaping role.

Massinger's *Duke of Milan*, performed by the King's Men and first published by Edward Blackmore in the same year as Shakespeare's Folio, also contains elaborate prefatory material, including a dedication, *dramatis personae*, and commendatory verses, which are particularly notable in the context of other single-text first editions from the King's Men during this period, many of which do not contain prominent paratexts. In *The Duke of Milan*, these paratextual materials confer a sense of authorization on the play's publication, especially when considering the 1619 request for prior approval from the company. It is perhaps significant that the play's dedicatee is Lady Katherine Stanhope, who was Massinger's first known patron, and, as Martin Garrett observes, was of a similar political persuasion to the Herberts.¹¹⁶ Along with Shakespeare's Folio, the limited first-editions from the King's Men seem to be connected through their dedications, authors, and political applications to the Herbert family. Indeed, Massinger, who would emerge as one of the most published professional dramatists (specifically in relation to first editions) during the Jacobean and Caroline periods, was closely associated with the Herberts. In the epistle to *The Bondman*, published in 1624 by Blackmore and John Harrison, and dedicated to Philip Herbert, Massinger asserts his claim to 'the Noble Family of the Herberts' as a result of the 'many years [his father, Arthur Massinger had] happily spent in the seruice of your Honourable House, and dyed a seruant to it'.¹¹⁷

Evidence for connections between the Herbert family and the King's Men suggests that this network considerably influenced the performance and publication of the history play during the late Jacobean period, including its development as a type of dramatic engagement that

¹¹⁶ Martin Garrett, 'Massinger, Philip (1583–1640)', *ODNB*, para.12.

¹¹⁷ Philip Massinger, *The Bondman* (STC 17632, 1624), A3r.

challenges temporal distinctions, while representing a recognizable ‘past’ on stage. This negotiation is pushed to an extreme with *A Game at Chess*, a text which reflects the characteristics of the history play that were emerging at this time and which have been overlooked by narratives of the history play that closely associate the genre with Shakespeare’s Folio histories. While plays dramatizing a recognizable past appeared regularly on the early modern stages and were often used to suggest contemporary parallels, this foregrounding of political applications through the direct representation of recent events did not take place with such concentration and notoriety until the late Jacobean period.

Manuscripts, reprints, and readerly adaptations: Shaping the history play as a text to be read

The prominence of the King’s Men, their connection to the Herbert family, and the evidence of publication control in relation to their plays have significantly shaped the survival and subsequent critical perceptions of the history play in print at the end of James’s reign. While performance and licensing records (including evidence of lost plays), together with extant plays printed in later periods, indicate a significant performance presence, history-play edition numbers between 1619 and 1625 are limited. This disparity between performance and publication has been largely overlooked due to a critical tendency to equate printed playbooks with repertory patterns, but it crucially reveals the different influences and agents shaping the development and transmission of the history play. In this way, a patronage link between the King’s Men and the Herberts can be seen as not only influencing performance developments but also the critical narrative of the early modern history play and its circulation in print.

Indeed, the importance of manuscript production for Middleton’s *A Game at Chess* introduces the possibility that the King’s Men, in order to confer a degree of distinction and exclusivity on their plays, encouraged the transmission of their plays in manuscript for an elite readership. Supporting this hypothesis is the greater concentration of extant play manuscripts from the professional theatres that can be dated to the 1620s and 1630s. A considerable number of

these show signs of having been prepared for readers, rather than being playhouse manuscripts.¹¹⁸ Similarly, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century lists of manuscript collections suggest an increase in manuscript circulation, including John Warburton's claims (c.1682-1759) of owning an extensive selection of unprinted manuscript drama from Jacobean and Caroline playwrights (which, he alleges, was destroyed by his cook) and Abraham Hill's list (c.1677-1703) of largely Jacobean and Caroline plays in manuscript, which seems to have been a record of a bookseller's stock.¹¹⁹

While the veracity of these claims, especially Warburton's, is questionable, paratextual materials in other plays from this period certainly indicate the circulation of plays in manuscript. For example, stationer Thomas Walkley's dedication to Sir Henry Neville (d.1629) in Beaumont and Fletcher's *A King and No King* (1619) announces Walkley's presentation 'or rather returne vnto your view, that which formerly hath beene receiued from you, hereby effecting what you did desire', suggesting Neville's earlier reading of the play in manuscript and, perhaps, his desire for its publication.¹²⁰ Indeed, on the evidence of paratexts and print patterns, Walkley was involved in the transmission and publication of plays from the King's Men, including Beaumont, Fletcher and Massinger's *Thierry and Theodoret* (1621) and Shakespeare's *Othello* (1622). The latter occupies the significant position of being the only Shakespearian first edition printed after Pembroke's 1619 attempt at publication restriction and in close proximity to the release of the First Folio in 1623, which was clearly overseen by the company. Evidence for the agency of stationers in the publication of first editions is limited during this period, owing to the 1619 injunction which attempts to reallocate privileges to companies and patrons, and the smaller overall number of printed plays. However, Walkley, together with Nicholas Okes (who was the printer of *Thierry and Theodoret* and two editions of *A Game at Chess*), emerge as the main stationers involved in

¹¹⁸ W.W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses: Stage plots, actors' parts, prompt books* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), p.370.

¹¹⁹ BL Lansdowne MS 807 and BL Sloane MS 2893. Cf. *LPD*.

¹²⁰ *A King and no King* (STC 1670, 1619), A2v.

single-text first editions from the company.¹²¹ Their access to these plays suggests a connection with the King's Men in relation to the publication of select first editions.

While a limited number of first-edition history plays was printed during the late Jacobean period, a close examination of publication patterns reveals that the reprint market continued at a relatively consistent rate and that the publication trough between 1619 and 1625 is mostly caused by fewer numbers of first editions. This disparity between the first-edition and reprint markets draws attention to the different production agents controlling the publication and propagation of history plays: companies and patrons attempted to influence (and restrict) the publication of first editions, but, for those plays already in print, stationers remained the primary agents in determining the selection, timing, and presentation of subsequent editions.¹²²

As discussed in Chapter 3, this pattern of division in stationer involvement between first and reprint editions was starting to emerge in the early Jacobean period, as can be seen in Law's reprints of Shakespeare's English histories and Butter's investment in first editions (and their reprints, when they proved successful). During the late Jacobean period, these two stationers dominated the market for reprinted history plays: Law retained the rights to the titles originally held by Wise and published further editions of *Richard II* (Q5 1615), *Richard III* (Q6 1622), and *I Henry IV* (Q6 1622), and Butter concentrated on reprints of the first editions he originally published between 1605 and 1609, including, Heywood's *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1, Q6 1623; and Part 2, Q3 1623) and Rowley's *When You See Me You Know Me* (Q3 1621). Stationer patterns in relation to first editions are more disparate between 1619 and 1625, both in terms of the individuals involved and their geographical position in London's book trade; in contrast, the reprint market for history plays remained relatively consistent and spatially concentrated. Law and Butter continued to operate at the Sign of the

¹²¹ See n.113.

¹²² See Massai, *Editor*, pp.106-12.

Fox and the Sign of the Pied Bull, respectively, making St Austin's Gate in Paul's Churchyard a geographical focus for the wholesale of older and more established history plays. While the plays do not differ greatly in their presentation from earlier editions and contain a limited number of substantive variants, their publication timing is concentrated around 1621-23, when concerns about the Spanish match, royal favourites, and national instability were reaching a climax, encouraging local readings that connect the plays to the ongoing religious and political conflicts of the late Jacobean period, which were similarly presented in a range of non-dramatic materials, including Scott's pamphlets on the lives of celebrated Protestant figures.¹²³

Significantly, Butter also embarked upon the publication of newsbooks and corantos during this period. In collaboration with Nicholas Bourne, Butter was responsible for the first serial news publications in 1622, which reported on the events of the Thirty Years' War and displayed partisan support for the cause of international Protestantism.¹²⁴ Butter's other publications promote a similar religious and political orientation, and he was prosecuted several times for the vituperative and militantly Protestant content of his texts. In 1620, when Butter published a pamphlet entitled *A plain demonstration of the unlawful succession of the now emperor Ferdinand II, because of the incestuous marriage of his parents*, both he and his printer, William Stansby, were imprisoned. The text, carrying a false imprint that identified its place of publication as The Hague, was censored for its fulsome condemnation of Ferdinand II, which described him as 'a Bastard, borne of more then an illegitimate, yea of an execrable Mariage' and asserted that 'neither by the Law of God or man he may possesse by Inheritance, so much as one foote of Land'. The pamphlet concludes with a call to arms, addressed to soldiers: 'Goe to them: rather deliuer your Country the most flourishing Empire of the World, from this ignominie'.¹²⁵ Within the publication context of increasingly militant tracts that encouraged active engagement with international Protestantism, Butter's early

¹²³ See, for example, Scott's *Robert Earle of Essex his Ghost, sent from Elizian* (STC 222084a, 1624).

¹²⁴ See Folke Dahl, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks, 1620-1642* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1952), pp.86-87.

¹²⁵ Anon., *A plaine demonstration*, ¶3v-4r.

Jacobean playbooks acquire a new currency, suggesting partisan support for Protestant deliverance on the Continent.

Although not published by Butter or Law, the reprinted edition of Marlowe's *Edward II* (Q4) in 1622 similarly offers a specific local reading through its publication timing. The printing of this edition (by Eliot's Court Press for Henry Bell) coincided with widespread antagonism towards Buckingham as James I's influential favourite. Marlowe's play dramatizes the politically destabilizing relationships between Edward II and his confidants, namely Gaveston and the Despensers, making the timing of Bell's edition a clear attempt at encouraging a contemporary parallel with James and his proclivity for royal favourites, specifically Buckingham (and, previously, Robert Carr). However, this parallel is even more striking when examining accounts of the 1621 parliament. One of the principal grievances in this session was the abuse of monopolies, and when the attorney-general, Sir Henry Yelverton, was questioned about his enforcement of a patent for gold and silver thread, he attempted to place blame on the Villiers family, stating that 'my lord of Buckingham was ever at His Majesty's Hand, ready, upon every Occasion to hew me down', and adding that if Buckingham 'had but read the Articles exhibited in this Place against Hugh Spencer, and had known the Danger of placing and displacing Officers about a King, he would not have pursued me with such Bitterness'.¹²⁶ This comparison between Buckingham and the Despensers (the favourites of Edward II, featured in Marlowe's play) shocked the house and James I, who declared 'If he Spencer, I Edward II [...] I had rather be no king than such a one as King Edward II'.¹²⁷ Bell's edition of *Edward II* appeared in 1622 and was probably influenced by the notorious parliamentary comparisons of 1621. It attempted to capitalize on the ways older history plays could be re-appropriated to reflect directly on shifting political conditions and figureheads.

¹²⁶ *Journal of the House of Lords: Volume 3, 1620-1628* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1767-1830), pp.121-22.

¹²⁷ Roger Lockyer, 'Villiers, George, first duke of Buckingham (1592-1628)', *ODNB*, para.18.

The reprinting of these plays suggests that stationers anticipated readers' demand for historical representations that had the potential for contemporary application, a pattern that was characterizing new history plays on stage, as well as non-dramatic publications and personal correspondence. An interest in historical appropriation can be seen in the so-called Dering manuscript (Folger MS V.b.34), or *The History of Henrie the fourth*, which was prepared in c.1623 and is the first extant Shakespearian adaptation by a reader, consisting of a revision, abridgement, and conflation of the two parts of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. The manuscript, which shows two hands, was prepared by Sir Edward Dering (1598-1644) of Surrendon Hall, Kent, and a professional scribe, 'Mr Carington'.¹²⁸ As George Walton Williams and Gwynne Blakemore Evans discuss in their 1974 facsimile, it appears that Dering undertook an adaptation of Shakespeare's two plays, making use of the fifth quarto (1613) of *1 Henry IV* and the second issue of the 1600 edition of *2 Henry IV*.¹²⁹ He started to transcribe the first part of the play himself, but then handed it over to Carington, while he continued to oversee, annotate, and revise.

What is particularly significant about the Dering manuscript is its demonstration of a reader's engagement with the history play, which, through the adaptation, serves to reposition the two original plays and draw attention to their topical potential. Dering apparently prepared the manuscript for some household theatricals, although evidence from the manuscript suggests that he did not finish his adaptation, and it is unlikely that the play was performed in its current state.¹³⁰ In his revision, Dering favoured the first part of *Henry IV*, omitting only two scenes

¹²⁸ Dering's 'Book of expences' shows that on 27 February 1623 he paid 'mr Carington for writing oute ye play of K: Henry ye fourth', which reveals both the scribe's name and the probable year of transcription (see Jean-Christophe Mayer, 'Annotating and transcribing for the theatre: Shakespeare's early modern reader-revisers at work' in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Kidnie and Massai, pp.163-76 [p.173]). Dering appears to have transcribed the first page of the manuscript, incorporating some additional lines into Shakespeare's opening scene, while Carington was responsible for the rest of the manuscript, with Dering adding occasional comments and annotations throughout (see George Walton Williams and Gwynne Blakemore Evans (eds.), *The History of King Henry the Fourth, as revised by Sir Edward Dering, Bart.* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974), pp.vii-viii).

¹²⁹ Williams and Evans (eds.), pp.vii-viii.

¹³⁰ For example, the character Westmoreland has been carefully cut from Part 1, but not from Part 2, indicating that Dering had not finished his process of correction and revision. *Ibid.*, pp.viii-ix.

and cutting about eleven percent of the lines overall, which contrasts significantly with his treatment of the second part, from which the majority of scenes are omitted, or about seventy-five percent of the lines.¹³¹ The resulting adaptation concentrates attention on the rebellion of the Northern lords and the death of Henry IV, marginalizing Hal's development and the presence of Falstaff, and foregrounding a single rebellious uprising and its suppression, swiftly followed by the death of Henry IV.

Aside from repositioning the plays to focus more fully on the threat and consequences of rebellion posed by disaffected nobles, the manuscript contains additions by Dering which further its potential for contemporary commentary. The longest are an eight-line insertion in the opening scene and a six-line addition to conclude the play, both of which draw attention to the importance of military action to preserve national stability, an emphasis that redirects the presentation in Shakespeare's quartos.¹³² The addition in the opening scene follows on from Henry IV's reference to a holy crusade replacing civil conflict at the beginning of Q5 / *Henry IV*, but reshapes this idea of undertaking a religious expedition. Instead, the addition advances a secular agenda, promoting military conquest and intervention, and prioritizing the honour and renown that ensue from international engagement:

The high aspiring Cresant of the turke,
Wee'll plucke into a lower orbe and then
Humbling her borrowed Pride to th' English lyon,
With labour and with honour wee'le fetch there
A sweating laurell from the glorius East
And plant new jemms on royall Englands crowne.
Wee'll pitch our honores att the sonnes uprise
And sell our selves or winn a glorious prize.¹³³

This presentation recalls, as Mayer explores, a Tamburlainean conqueror seeking to 'plant new jemms on royall Englands crowne' and 'winn a glorious prize', rather than the reflective and regretful monarch of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.¹³⁴ Dering's adaptation furthers this impulse

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p.ix.

¹³² See Mayer, pp.174-75.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp.2-5 (Folio 1r); Compare with Shakespeare, *The History of Henrie the Fourth* (STC 22284: 1613), A2r-v.

¹³⁴ Mayer, pp.174.

in his substantial concluding addition, which incorporates an allusion to *Henry V* and more emphatically prioritizes Henry IV's recommendation to undertake foreign military conquests as a means of ensuring national stability:

Now change our thoughtes for honour and renowne.
And since the royalty and crowne of Fraunce,
Is due to us wee'll bring itt to our awe,
Or breake itt all to peeeces. Vanities farewell,
Wee'll now act deedes for Chronicles to tell.¹³⁵

Dering's adaptation of the two parts of *Henry IV* can be seen, especially through these two additions and his reshaping of the plot, as engaging with debates from the late Jacobean period concerning England's involvement in the European religious and territorial conflicts and James's interest in a Spanish alliance. It is a clear example of a late Jacobean reader's interpretation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays from the late 1590s, adapting, as Jean-Christophe Mayer posits, 'two plays where royal power appears weak and incapable of chasing the infidel' to reflect Dering's 'interventionist wishful thinking or frustration about the way national and international politics were conducted'.¹³⁶

The publication of Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623, which contains ten plays under the classification 'Histories', together with others which draw on historical materials (including *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Julius Caesar*), would have offered another opportunity for individuals to engage with history plays. Interestingly, Dering is the first recorded purchaser of Shakespeare's Folio: he acquired two copies on 5 December 1623, as is demonstrated by his account books.¹³⁷ As well as re-presenting Shakespeare's

¹³⁵ Williams and Evans (eds.), pp.222-23 (Folio 55v). Compare with *Henry the fift* (STC 22289, 1600), A4r:

And by your ayde, the noble sinewes of our land,
France being ours, wee le bring it to our awe,
Or breake it all in peeeces:
Eyther our Chronicles shal with full mouth speak
Freely of our acts,
Or else like toonglesse mutes
Not worshipt with a paper Epitaph.

¹³⁶ Mayer, p.175.

¹³⁷ Emma Smith, *Shakespeare's First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp.1-4.

history plays in a new interpretative context, shaped by late Jacobean political and religious anxieties, the Folio assigns a generic category to each of Shakespeare's plays (with the exception of *Troilus and Cressida*), which influences how readers encounter the texts.¹³⁸ As discussed in the introduction and throughout this study, the First Folio aligns the category of 'Histories' with English monarchical history plays, and offers an important (and influential) case study for reading history plays in late Jacobean England. However, it is unreasonable to conclude that the organization of plays in this collected edition is indicative of specific and widespread ideas about genre. Critics have afforded undue significance to the First Folio's division of Shakespeare's plays into the categories of 'Comedies, Histories & Tragedies'; Shakespeare has been identified (explicitly or indirectly) as the main dramatist involved in the writing of history plays and the Folio's 'histories' have been used to define the genre and its subject matter.¹³⁹ A central aim of this study is to challenge this narrow perception, and draw attention to the parallels and interconnections between other plays that engage with a recognizable past, but not necessarily within the limited parameters of medieval English monarchical history.

Indeed, when considering the context of the First Folio's publication in 1623, there is little to suggest that this classification was in any way representative of readers' expectations about 'history' plays. The Folio's division of plays was probably part of the collected edition's negotiation of its literary position, offering a middle ground between the presumptive presentation of Jonson's plays as 'Workes' in his folio edition of 1616, and the privileging of performance origins, as seen in numerous other playbooks from the period. Refraining from making any reference to Shakespeare's texts as 'plays', the First Folio's full title-page description, '*Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* | Published

¹³⁸ See Salzman, pp.7, 42-48, who argues that the Folio was 'an exception to the constant and contingent encouragement of political reading', suggesting that 'the most politically charged plays in the Folio were buried'.

¹³⁹ See the Prologue to this study, pp.12-22.

according to the True Originall Copies' (A1r), decentralizes issues of form and theatrical provenance by prioritizing classifications that are based on ideas of genre.

The use of these categories does not necessarily suggest widespread acceptance: when considering other texts from this period, the term 'history' is not applied in a consistent fashion, its usage pointing to inclusivity rather than the exclusivity suggested by the First Folio. Indeed, following the Folio's publication, playbooks continued to use terms such as 'history' and 'historical' as part of their title-page descriptions with much the same variety as before. Reprints of *Doctor Faustus* ('Tragicall History'), *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* ('Honorable Historie'), and *Pericles* ('whole History') used the same classifications as their first editions, and, more significantly for dispelling claims of the permanence and fixity of these generic distinctions, first-edition playbooks, including such wide-ranging texts as *The Costly Whore* in 1633 ('Comicall Historie'), *Perkin Warbeck* in 1634 ('Chronicle Historie'), and *The Great Duke of Florence* in 1636 ('Comicall Historie'), continued to employ variants of this descriptive term. Interestingly, these uses of the term 'history' all appear with a qualifier that serves to clarify the nature of the history offered by the play, which contrasts with the Folio's unqualified use. In particular, the epithets 'Tragicall', 'Comicall', and 'Chronicle' negate the Folio's three-fold division of plays through their alignment with 'history', a term which, as can be seen, continued to have a wide application.

Conclusions

During the late Jacobean period, a range of controls influenced (and, in some cases, limited) the presentation on stage and in print of history plays, including official censorship and self-censorship, increasing political tensions and anxieties, the position of the King's Men as the pre-eminent professional company, and the role of the Herbert family as important political and theatrical figures. In particular, the King's Men and the Herberts seem to have exerted increasing influence over the publication of history plays from James's company. Moreover, the preparation of Shakespeare's First Folio, a significant collected edition, together with the

manuscript circulation of other plays, perhaps indicate an exclusive readership as the intended audience for plays from the King's Men. Stationers retained primary roles in the publication of history play reprints, where older plays were reshaped in light of the political context of their later presentation and the wider publishing strategies of their stationers, as in the reprints of *Law and Butter at St Austin's Gate*.

The late Jacobean history play is also characterized by the adaptation of recent or current events, encouraging the drawing of a parallel between the emergence of serial newsbooks in 1623 and other political pamphlets, such as those of Thomas Scott and John Reynolds, which used dramatic dialogues in the presentation of topical political issues. Subsequent critical studies that have positioned English monarchical plays as commensurate with the genre of historical dramatizations neglect important appropriations of the recent past, including *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* and *A Game at Chess*, which dispel notions of an identifiable boundary between the past and present, and problematize arbitrary temporal restrictions in the classification of history plays. Shakespeare's First Folio has proved immensely influential for later critics in defining and outlining dramatic genres, but its reflection of widely prevalent ideas about genre during the early modern period is limited.

5

Fragmenting agency: Reading history plays as political drama during the 1630s

Studyes haue, of this Nature, been of late
So out of fashion, so vnfollow'd; that
It is become more Iustice, to reuiue
The antick follyes of the Times, then striue
To countenance wise Industrie.

John Ford, *Perkin Warbeck* (1634)¹

Accounts of historical engagement on the early modern stage have routinely neglected the Caroline period, claiming that few new history plays were performed or published. The prologue from *Perkin Warbeck* has been accepted as an acknowledgement of the history play's decline: its claim that studies 'of this nature' have been 'so out of fashion' has perhaps exerted undue influence on critical appraisals, and perpetuated the prioritization of English chronicle history to the exclusion of other forms of historical engagement on stage. *Perkin Warbeck* has been seen as a 'fascinating oddity' within the Caroline period, but, instead, it can be more usefully described as a play that, while looking back at earlier texts including the medieval English histories of Shakespeare, is firmly situated within the performance and publication patterns of the Caroline period.²

As opposed to being 'so unfollowed' as to occupy a marginal position, history plays were regularly utilized, adapted, and published during the Caroline period, especially in the years coinciding with the Personal Rule of Charles I (1629-1640), reaching some of the highest levels of print publication for the entire early modern period (see Appendix A). To a degree,

¹ *The Chronicle Historie of Perkin Warbeck* (STC 11157, 1634), A4v. Further references will be given after quotations.

² Alexander Leggatt, 'A Double Reign: *Richard II* and *Perkin Warbeck*', in *Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, ed. by E.A.J. Honigmann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp.129-39 (p.138). See also Miles Taylor, 'The End of the English History Play in *Perkin Warbeck*', *SEL*, 48:2 (2008), 395-418.

the patterns in performance and publication described at the end of Chapter 4 reversed as the 1630s progressed. The late Jacobean period witnessed regular performances of history plays, but limited first-edition publications of these plays. The Caroline period, in contrast, recorded a gradual lessening in new history plays on stage, in conjunction with a print explosion at the end of the 1630s. Many first and reprint editions of history plays were published during this time, a pattern that Alan Farmer and Zachary Lesser have identified for playbook publication more widely.³

It is a central aim of this chapter to reappraise the binaries (including royalist and oppositional; Laudian and Puritan; court and city) that are often employed when discussing the 1630s and to avoid claims that plays support particular ideological positions. This chapter challenges the teleological narrative of Martin Butler's *Theatre and Crisis* (1984) in which plays are said to have either royalist or oppositional sympathies, and participate in an expanding discourse that culminates in the English Civil War. Instead, the chapter concentrates on local readings and engagements with historical drama, an approach favoured by Adam Zucker and Alan Farmer in *Localizing Caroline Drama* (2006).⁴ Plays can be seen as politically invested throughout the period, but they do not encourage singular, overriding interpretations that position them firmly within a Caroline political narrative.

During the Caroline period, the theatrical companies that, on the basis of surviving texts and records, performed the greatest number of history plays were those closest to the court – the King's Men and Queen Henrietta Maria's Men. The dominance of royally-patronized companies in the performance of history plays is a pattern that has recurred throughout this study. Unlike other periods, there seem to be fewer consistent patterns in stationer

³ Farmer and Lesser, 'Popularity', pp.7-10, 27-28; and 'Canons and Classics: Publishing Drama in Caroline England' in *Localizing Caroline Drama: Politics and Economics of the Early Modern English Stage, 1625-1642*, ed. by Adam Zucker and Alan Farmer (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp.17-41.

⁴ 'Introduction' in *Localizing Caroline Drama*, pp.1-15.

involvement in the publication of first editions, which furthers the trend observed at the end of the Jacobean period. A diverse range of plays are performed and printed, and no stationer or group of stationers appears to specialize in first-edition historical dramas, as Creede, Wise, and Butter did in earlier periods. Other agents of production, including theatrical companies, censors, and patrons, are closely connected both to the publication of plays and the development of historical dramatizations on stage. As will be considered in the first part of this chapter, heightened censorship and efforts at performance and publication control, in combination with the influence of Henrietta Maria's court, encouraged the privileging of distant histories as a means of connecting with contemporary political issues (a pattern that Butler identifies). These plays do not, however, suggest a clear political affiliation that would position them as propagandistic tools. In contrast to the current events dramatized in late Jacobean plays, such as *A Game at Chess*, Caroline plays started to prioritize classical histories (as in *The Roman Actor* and *Believe as You List*), as well as romance plots (as in *The Queen of Aragon*), in order to engage with political and religious debates. The second part of the chapter will direct its focus at the Caroline history play in print, concentrating on *Perkin Warbeck* (1634), *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634), and reprints of Shakespeare's English histories and the Jacobean 'elect nation' plays, featured in Chapter 3 and 4. This section will draw attention to the importance of both first editions and reprints in understanding the numerous positionings and diverse local readings suggested by the plays' paratextual materials and their association with particular stationers. It will examine them as evidence of a generic fragmentation of diverging voices that considerably shaped the position and utility of the history play during the 1630s.

Shaping the Caroline history play on stage: Company changes, censorship, and Henrietta Maria's court

Performed by the King's Men in 1626 and published by Robert Allott in 1629, Philip Massinger's *The Roman Actor* is a significant, and perhaps formative, text for this period, as its engagement with history and its printed presentation encapsulate some of the dominant

elements that are later seen with history plays in the 1630s. It was licensed by Henry Herbert on 11 October 1626, making it the first recorded play from the Caroline period to engage with historical material (James I had died in March 1625, and the theatres had been closed for much of that year due to a severe outbreak of the plague, which contributed to sparse licensing records).⁵ With the play's presentation of classical history emphasizing its topicality and application to contemporary politics (also highlighted through the paratextual materials in the play's printed edition), *The Roman Actor* can be seen as furthering some of the characteristics of late Jacobean history plays, but also reshaping them to promote a different historical focus that reflects literary, theatrical, and political developments in the newly established Caroline state.

Although Charles and Buckingham's return from Madrid in 1623 (while James was still king) had been greeted with enthusiasm, and the prince's adoption of a more aggressive stance towards Spain was celebrated by contemporaries who strongly opposed the Spanish match and sought greater military intervention in the continental conflicts, the popular support of Charles's politics did not continue very far into his reign. Charles's succession in March 1625 roughly coincided with the beginning of England's direct engagement in the Thirty Years' War (which was to last until the Treaty of Susa in 1629 and the Treaty of Madrid in 1630). However, this military engagement was characterized by a series of embarrassing failures, partly stemming from the differing priorities of king, councillors, and parliament. Privy councillors, such as William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke, and parliamentary figures, including Sir John Eliot, opposed the continued (and increasing) influence of Buckingham, who had been the royal favourite of two successive monarchs. Charles gave Buckingham control of foreign diplomacy and intervention, which aroused the suspicion of his opponents, and limited the cooperation of the 1625 and 1626 parliaments in relation to war preparations and the voting of subsidies to fund military engagement. These developments contributed to

⁵ Bawcutt (ed.), p.164.

the disastrous outcomes of Mansfeld's campaign and the Cadiz expedition in 1625, and the Ré expedition in 1627.⁶

Although it is set during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian (who ruled from 81 to 96 AD), *The Roman Actor* closely engages with its early Caroline political context. The play draws on Jacobean theatrical exempla, including *Sejanus* (1605) and *A Game at Chess* (1625), but repositions them to create an image of the emerging Caroline court. Annabel Patterson sees the timing of the play's licensing and first performance as connected to specific parliamentary disputes and the growing unease concerning Charles's absolutist views and his attitude towards parliamentary debate.⁷ Sir John Eliot, an outspoken opponent of Buckingham, had compared the duke to Sejanus in May 1626, an analogue for which he was imprisoned. This episode was closely followed, in October 1626, by the licensing of *The Roman Actor*, which suggests the publication may have been planned in response to Eliot's imprisonment. Indeed, Massinger's play was greatly indebted to Jonson's *Sejanus*, which features an influential court favourite and his control over the emperor Tiberius.

The Roman Actor uses a similar Roman history to examine the state and consequences of a tyrannical ruler, incorporating a series of inset plays that explore the ability of performance to enact or encourage change. The play's final lines offer a warning against tyrannical government and suggests that such rulers are unlamented when they fall from power:

Good Kings are mourn'd for after life, but ill
And such as govern'd onely by their will
And not their reason, Vnlamented fall
No Goodmans teare shed at their Funerall.⁸

By portraying an absolutist governing figure (in the character of Domitian) and exploring drama's ability to address and intervene in matters of state (through the inset plays), *The*

⁶ See Lockyer, *Early Stuarts*, pp.162-68.

⁷ *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), p.88.

⁸ Philip Massinger, *The Roman Actor* (STC 17642, 1629), K4v.

Roman Actor announces its potential for contemporary application and political commentary. Moreover, when the play was published in 1629, its extensive paratextual materials, including a dedication from Massinger and a series of commendatory verses, further emphasize the connection between the play's classical dramatization and early Caroline political debates, asserting drama's ability to influence its readers. For example, John Ford's commendatory address describes how Massinger's representation of historical individuals may inspire action:

[...] thy abler Pen
Spoke them, and made them speake, nay Act agen
In such a height, that Heere to know their Deeds
Hee may become an Actor that but Reades.⁹

While Ford is drawing on conventional tropes, praising Massinger for his ability to construct dialogue that revitalizes his Roman story, these verses suggest an additional association, foregrounding Massinger's interest in how a play can shape actions on the stage and in wider political life, and turn the play's readers into both theatrical and political actors. The publication context of *The Roman Actor* introduces this impulse: Sir John Eliot was arrested again in March 1629 for parliamentary insubordination towards Charles, and, as Patterson suggests, this event may have brought about the publication of Massinger's play in the same year, providing an opportunity for indirect commentary on recent political events, which were dominated by the suppression of dissenting views.¹⁰

Just as *The Roman Actor* inaugurates the Caroline dramatization of history, so political and theatrical events from the early years of Charles's reign can be seen as influencing later historical appropriations on stage. In the intervening years between the licensing and first performance of *The Roman Actor* in 1626 and its quarto publication in 1629, a series of progressively contentious parliaments and heightened efforts at censorship and publication control made more direct representations of church and state (as in *A Game at Chess*), as well as the depiction of recent histories, increasingly problematic. The fractious parliaments of

⁹ Massinger, *Roman*, A4r.

¹⁰ Patterson, p.88.

1625, 1626, 1628, and 1629 opposed Buckingham's influence (which culminated in his impeachment in 1626, shortly before his assassination in 1628). They also took issue with Charles's hostile attitude towards parliamentary debate and challenged his royal prerogative (especially in relation to forced loans and sudden imprisonment); these debates led to the Petition of Right in 1628, to which the king reluctantly acquiesced.¹¹

Probably in response to growing political instability and opposition, Charles attempted to suppress direct commentary on matters of church and state. He issued a royal proclamation in 1626, which claimed that 'in all ages great disturbances, both to Church and State, haue ensued out of small beginnings, when the seedes of Contention were not timely preuented'. As a result, his proclamation prohibited 'Writing, Preaching, Printing, Conferences, or otherwise' on 'opinions concerning Religion' and the government of the state that departed from 'Orthodoxall grounds'.¹² Further attempts were made at silencing and suppressing potentially contentious materials and outspoken individuals, and as Clegg observes, during the reign of Charles I, 'censorship became impressed upon the cultural imagination in a way that it had not been in the past'.¹³ Charles started to utilize the court of Star Chamber as a venue for printing disputes, a significant development indicating more stringent efforts at control, particularly as the Star Chamber did not have any special jurisdiction over censorship and the press. At the end of the 1629 parliament, Charles imprisoned and prosecuted members of the House of Commons (including Benjamin Valentine, Denzil Holles and John Eliot) for their outspoken opposition during the parliamentary session which Charles deemed offensive, and in doing so, initiated what Clegg describes as the 'Caroline transformation of Star

¹¹ See Lockyer, *Early Stuarts*, pp.240-81.

¹² Charles I, *Proclamation for the establishing of the Peace and Quiet of the Church of England* (STC 8824, 1626), 2 sheets.

¹³ Cyndia Susan Clegg, *Press Censorship in Caroline England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp.41-42.

Chamber practice'.¹⁴ Unlike his predecessors, Elizabeth I and James I, Charles started to use the courts of Star Chamber and High Commission to practice censorship.¹⁵

As might be expected, readerly interest in these debates and developments was widespread, and commentary continued in both manuscript and printed publications. A tension can be witnessed between pronounced attempts at censorship and suppression, and a proliferation of divisive texts that suggest the failure of some of these strictures, a pattern that can also be detected earlier in the decade through James's efforts at controlling the circulation of seditious material, as discussed in Chapter 4. For example, when Thomas May's ten-book translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, was published by Thomas Jones and John Marriot in 1627, it contained a series of dedications to prominent Protestant aristocrats, including the earls of Warwick, Pembroke, and Essex, which prefaced each of the books.¹⁶ As Norbrook observes, these dedicatees 'were associated with patriotic independence, at a time of great anxiety about the king's apparent subservience to the unpredictable Buckingham'.¹⁷ Significantly, the dedications have been excised from most extant copies of May's text and were cancelled from later editions, suggesting their incorporation in the volume was politically sensitive, especially as this juxtaposition aligned prominent contemporary figures with republican views that challenged monarchical authority.

The first few years of the Caroline period provide an important foundation for understanding the history play during the 1630s, which is the focus of this chapter. During this time, historical dramas on stage are characterized by their political commentary and the use of temporally distant accounts and romance sources, partly to avoid censorship. Changing

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.116.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.121.

¹⁶ The full list of dedicatees for the ten-book edition includes 'William, Earle of Devonshire' (a2r); 'William, Earle of Pembroke' (B6r); 'Edward, Earle of Mowbray' (D5r); 'Robert, Earle of Essex' (F2r); 'Robert, Earle of Lynsey' (H1r); 'William, Earle of Devon' (K1r); 'Sir Horatio Vere, Baron of Tilbury' (M1r); 'Theophilus, Earle of Lincolne' (O1r); and 'Robert, Earle of Warwicke' (Q2r). May, *Lvcan's Pharsalia* (STC 16887, 1627).

¹⁷ David Norbrook, 'May, Thomas (b. in or after 1596, d.1650)', *ODNB*, para.3.

patterns in the operations of repertory companies also contributed to the development of history plays and the greater fragmentation in networks of external agents that influenced their survival, presentation, and reception. As Gurr observes, the patronage system was disappearing as a form of theatrical control and regulation, and, in its place, company impresarios and the Master of the Revels started to emerge in positions of greatest agency.¹⁸ Before the Caroline period, the majority of companies had aristocratic patrons and received a special patent authorizing their performances. After the succession of Charles I, the only company to receive a royal patent was the King's Men on 24 June 1625 – significantly, Queen Henrietta Maria's Men never received a patent under Charles I, despite their closeness to the court and the theatrical interests of their nominal patron. Most of the other companies did not even acquire a patron or official name. Instead, they were frequently identified by the playhouse at which they most regularly performed (as in the Red Bull Company), and were issued with an annual licence from the Master of the Revels, which authorized them to play and travel.

This system of operation encouraged the dominance of company impresarios, such as Christopher Beeston with Henrietta Maria's Men (and later Beeston's Boys) at the Cockpit, and also influenced the publication of plays, as suggested by the 1637 printing restriction on plays from the King's Men and Henrietta Maria's Men (discussed later in the chapter). The expansive role taken by Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, in issuing touring and company licences, approving plays for both performance and publication, and requesting that older, previously-licensed plays be resubmitted for approval prior to performance similarly shaped theatrical repertories and the development of historical drama. While Herbert had earlier acted in conjunction with his kinsman, William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke and Lord Chamberlain until 1626, and allowed plays such as *A Game at Chess* for performance, his larger and centralized role in the Caroline period coincides with a probable increase in

¹⁸ Gurr, *SPC*, p.137.

theatrical censorship and attempts at control. The greater evidence available for this period (on account of the surviving transcriptions of Herbert's records) makes it difficult to offer a firm assessment of censorship efforts relative to other periods. However, Herbert's Revels documents record several notable incidents of suppression that suggest growing concern over topical political applications, the consequences of which can possibly be seen in the dramatization of distant histories (which mark a departure from the heightened contemporaneity of the late Jacobean period). On 18 November 1632, for example, Henrietta Maria's Men narrowly escaped punishment for their impersonation of contemporary courtiers in James Shirley's *The Ball*, and in 1639, Herbert censored the now-lost 'Whore New Vamped', criticizing the players at the Red Bull for acting 'a scandalous and Libellous play' that 'reflected vpon the present Government' and 'in a Libellous manner traduced and personated some persons of quality'.¹⁹

Herbert was also active in censoring plays that had previously received a licence, but which, in a climate of increasing censorship, were now thought to be 'full of offensive things against church and state', having been permissible only in a former time when 'the poets tooke greater liberty than is allowed by mee'.²⁰ While Herbert had previously requested that old plays be submitted for relicensing during the 1620s, his suppression of *The Tamer Tamed* from the King's Men in October 1633 precipitated a more extensive complaint:

Because the stoppage of the acting of this play for that afternoone, it being an ould play, hath rayased some discourse in the players, thogh no disobedience, I have thought fitt to [...] declare that it concernes the Master of the Revells to bee carefull of their ould revived playes, as of their new, since they may conteyne offensive matter, which ought not to be allowed in any time [...] The Master ought to have copies of their new playes left with him, that he may be able to shew what he hath allowed or disallowed [...] All ould plays ought to bee brought to the Master of the Revells, and have his allowance to them for which he should have his fee.²¹

¹⁹ Bawcutt (ed.), p.52. See Privy Council sitting of 29 September 1639 in E.K. Chambers and W.W. Greg (eds.), 'Dramatic Records from the Privy Council Register, 1603-1642', *Collections Parts IV & V*, Malone Society (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911), pp.370-95, (pp.394-95).

²⁰ Bawcutt (ed.), pp.182-83.

²¹ Bawcutt (ed.), p.182. On 18 October 1633, Herbert 'sent a warrant by a messenger of the chamber to suppress The Tamer Tamd, to the Kings players, for that afternoone, and it was obeyd; upon complaints of foule and offensive matters conteyned therin'.

In response to Herbert's concern that old plays might 'conteyne offensive matter', the King's Men duly acquiesced in submitting Fletcher's *The Loyal Subject* for relicensing, which Herbert allowed 'with some reformatiōns' on 23 November 1633.²²

Herbert's influence and the evidence of growing censorship efforts can be traced in Massinger's *Believe as You List* (written in 1630-31), which offers a useful example of patterns and developments in Caroline historical engagement. The play returns to classical history, as in *The Roman Actor*, but this selection of source material was a consequence of censorship. Events from the life of the Seleucid king, Antiochus the Great, were only loosely attached to the pre-existing, but suppressed, original history. While the earlier version of Massinger's play has not survived, evidence from the extant manuscript of the revised text, together with Herbert's account of its censorship, give clear signs of the play's original subject matter. On 11 January 1631, Herbert notes, 'I did refuse to allow of a play of Messinger's, because itt did contain dangerous matter, as the deposing of Sebastian king of Portugal, by Philip the [Second], and ther being a peace sworn twixte the kings of England and Spayne', thereby indicating the play's initial subject and drawing attention to the Master of the Revels' concern over its diplomatic implications.²³

As suggested, the original play dramatized events relating to the historical King Sebastian of Portugal, who had led an army into Africa in 1578 and probably perished in the battle of Alcacer-el-Kebir (also known as the Battle of Three Kings) in Morocco, an event which led to Philip II of Spain's annexing of the Portuguese throne (as discussed in Chapter 1 in relation to Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*). These events caused great interest and concern in England, owing to the mounting threat of Spain's political dominance, and laid the foundations for the later Armada attack in 1588. Indeed, dramatists explored some of these events on stage, as in

²² Herbert records *The Loyal Subject* as 'The first ould play sent mee to be perused by the K. players'. Bawcutt (ed.), p.185.

²³ Bawcutt (ed.), pp.171-72.

The Battle of Alcazar and the anonymous *Captain Thomas Stukeley*. The interest in Sebastian continued particularly because various pretenders arose who claimed to be the Portuguese king. John Chamberlain's letters contain several references to alleged sightings of Sebastian.²⁴ One of the most notable pretenders seems to have been a Calabrian called Marco Tullio, who appeared in Venice in 1598, managed to persuade the Venetian Republic of his claims, and then had a varied career in different countries, before being executed by Philip III in 1603. A number of representations of him in pamphlets, ballads, and plays appeared in England, and the quasi-legendary figure of Sebastian came to symbolize resistance towards Spain, encouraging the provision of assistance to persecuted allies, and emerging as a topical invocation in the context of the Thirty Years' War.

As indicated by Herbert's comments, Massinger's dramatization threatened the newly-established diplomatic relationship between England and Spain, following the Treaty of Madrid in 1630, which marked the cessation of hostilities between the two countries and involved Philip IV's formal reassurance that he would work for the restoration of the Palatinate to the Elector Frederick, Charles's brother-in-law. Herbert evidently viewed the original play as having the potential to accuse Spain of tyranny and usurpation through the dramatization of the frequently-appropriated figure of Sebastian. Indeed, the play may also have reflected negatively on Charles and his refusal to provide assistance to Frederick and his sister, Elizabeth, who had been effectively adopted by Protestant polemical writers and the anti-Habsburg forces in the Thirty Years' War as the international figureheads for the Protestant cause and the containment of Imperial power (as discussed in Chapter 4).

²⁴ McClure (ed.), *Chamberlain*, I, pp.49-50, 63, 70, 75, 106, 112-13. In a letter dated 17 January 1599 (p.63), Chamberlain writes: 'The newes comes now very hot that Sebastian the king of Portingale that was said to be slaine in the battell in Barbarie is at Venice, and hath made so goode triall of himself that the Venetians allowe him, and maintain almost fowrescore persons about him at theyre charge. They say he tells very straunge stories, how he with fowretene more escaped from the battayle and got up into the mountaines, and so by many adventures he went.'

In his revision, Massinger relocates the play to the second century BC, reassigning the contemporary characters classical names. The new history is about Antiochus the Great, who gained renown for his conquests in Asia (which rivalled those of Alexander the Great), but was defeated, in alliance with Hannibal, at Thermopylae in 191 BC by the consul Acilius Glabrio, and again in 190 BC by the Romans under Scipio Africanus. He was believed to have died in Luristan in 187 BC, although varying accounts of his death are recorded. Charles Sisson suggests that Massinger adapted his original play, chiefly and, perhaps, significantly, using *The History of the World* (1614) by Walter Raleigh, who had been pursued and executed to placate Spanish relations in 1618, therefore adding a politically invested interpretation through the choice of source materials.²⁵ As Sisson observes, Massinger's revisions 'enable Antiochus to be substituted for Sebastian as far as possible', and while there is no historical authority for certain events in the play, including Antiochus's escape from death and his persecution by the Romans, these elements were 'an essential part of the story of Sebastian and Spain'.²⁶ Indeed, the manuscript, which bears Herbert's eventual licence on 6 May 1631, contains numerous traces of the original play, suggesting the text was altered as little as possible, and in some cases, a straightforward substitution of character names was all that was required.²⁷ In several places, the original names survive, including the use of 'Sebastian' for Antiochus on folios 9a (line 634) and 13a (line 1127).²⁸

The prologue, contained at the end of the manuscript, draws attention to the play's potential for contemporary application, and indicates that the dramatization bears a closer resemblance to recent and domestic events than the nominal subjects of 'this strange historie':

[...] yf you finde what'es Roman here,
Grecian, or Asiaticqe, drawe to nere
a late, & sad example, tis confest
hee's but an English scholler at his best,
a stranger to Cosmographie, and may erre

²⁵ Philip Massinger, *Believe as you List*, ed. by Charles Sisson, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927), pp.xviii-xix; Hila, p.21.

²⁶ Massinger, *Believe*, p.xix.

²⁷ Bawcutt (ed.), p.172.

²⁸ Massinger, *Believe*, pp.22, 38.

in the cuntries names, the shape, & character
 of the person he presentes, yet he is bolde
 in me to promise, be it new, or olde,
 the tale is worth the hearinge²⁹

As in *The Roman Actor*, Massinger uses classical history in *Believe as You List* to facilitate connections with topical figures and anxieties, and highlights this potential through the prologue, which draws attention to the dramatist's position as an 'English scholler'. In relating the classical history, Massinger 'may erre | in the cuntries names, the shape & character | of the person he presentes', indicating that the play's dramatization of classical events is not of prime importance. Instead, it is the play's prioritization of a different history that is 'worth the hearinge'. Significantly in this case, classical history was not an original enabling convention for Massinger, but a required substitution in response to censorship. England's withdrawal from direct engagement in the Thirty Years' War, which marked the official end to hostilities with Spain and France, necessitated a degree of diplomacy in theatrical representations. This military withdrawal coincided with increasing domestic tensions in matters of religion and politics, which spurred additional censorship efforts and brought plays under more intense scrutiny. Thinly-veiled political allegories, such as *A Game at Chess*, were less permissible than they had been in the late Jacobean period, belonging to, as Herbert implies, a 'former time [when] the poetts tooke greater liberty'.³⁰ During the Caroline period, classical histories emerge as the most usable and adaptable subjects for historical engagement, and where the late Jacobean plays of *Barnavelt* and *A Game at Chess* push ideas of historical dramatization to topical extremes, Caroline history plays demonstrate a withdrawal from this extent of overt contemporaneity.

Charles himself was closely connected to various acts of censorship that attempted to silence debate and criticism, including those involving professional theatrical performances. In 1638, Massinger's 'The King and Subject' was censored at Charles's request: according to Herbert,

²⁹ Massinger, *Believe*, p.97, (fol. 28b).

³⁰ Bawcutt (ed.), p.183.

Charles read ‘over the play at Newmarket, set his marke upon the place with his owne hande, and in thes words [wrote]: This is too insolent and to bee changed’.³¹ Charles’s remarks relate to the following passage, which is the only surviving extract from the play:

Monys? Wee’le rayse supplies what ways we please,
And force you to subscribe to blanks, in which
We’le mulct you as wee shall thinke fit. The Caesars
In Rome were wise, acknowledging no laws
But what their swords did ratifye, the wives
And daughters of the senators bowinge to
Their wills, as deities, &c.³²

The extract addresses the use of forced loans to raise royal funds, a particularly contentious issue during the Caroline period. Both the extract and the play’s title, which carries associations of a contractual negotiation, suggest the play explored the relationship and responsibilities between a king and his subjects. Herbert further clarifies the context of the extract in his accounts, noting that ‘the poett makes it the speech of a king, Don Pedro king of Spayne, and spoken to his subjects’.³³ Herbert’s comments make it clear that Massinger was again pursuing a potentially undiplomatic representation of Spain in a way that also implied criticism of Charles’s policies, which likely informed the king’s censure.

Indeed, as Kevin Sharpe observes, the period of Charles’s Personal Rule was notable for its silence, and while evidence exists for the suppression of some performances and publications, more instances of censorship probably took place.³⁴ Arnold Hunt argues that ‘effective censorship is invisible [...] the best-documented cases of censorship may be the ones that are least representative’, and it is significant that most titles (97 percent) entered in the Stationers’ Register during the 1630s were officially authorized, which is not matched in earlier periods.³⁵

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.203-04.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.* According to Herbert, ‘The King and Subject’ was allowed on 5 June 1638, provided ‘the reformations [are] most strictly observed’.

³⁴ ‘The King’s Writ: Royal Authors and Royal Authority in Early Modern England’ in *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. by Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), pp.117-38, (p.133).

³⁵ Arnold Hunt, ‘Licensing and Religious Censorship’, in *Literature and Censorship in Renaissance England*, ed. by Andrew Hadfield (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001), pp.127-46 (p.127).

Despite these efforts at conformity, Charles regularly drew attention to the ‘promiscuous publishing which is dayly practised’, observing in a letter to the Stationers’ Company in 1631 that ‘the former boldnesse and disorder hath ben continewed in printing bookes without distinction to the scandall of gouernment and disadvantage of our service’.³⁶ In 1632, Charles refused to allow two manuscripts, following the recommendations of his advisor, Georg Rudolph Weckherlin, who described the first manuscript by Sir Robert Filmer as written ‘of Governement’ and the second involving the comparison of the King of Sweden to the French King. In his accompanying memo dated 8 February 1632, Weckherlin posited ‘whether such a subject at this time is fitter to bee made publick or kept in’, and Charles responded by suppressing both manuscripts.³⁷ Moreover, as newsbook circulation proliferated following the intervention of Sweden (under the command of Gustavus Adolphus) in the Thirty Years’ War, the Privy Council ordered the suppression of all weekly corantos on 17 October 1632, which was to last until 1638, and further contributed to this climate of prohibited direct commentary.

Perhaps the most notorious act of censorship during the Personal Rule concerns William Prynne and the publication of *Histrionomastix* in 1633. Prynne’s attack on the theatres and his prosecution, imprisonment, and public punishment have been seen as furthering a divide between an emerging Puritanical opposition to the theatre and a royalist faction, involving Charles and Henrietta Maria, who enjoyed and utilized the theatre.³⁸ Such binaries, however, are misleading, over-simplified, and anachronistic. While Prynne does condemn plays and theatre-going at a time when the royal family was becoming increasingly involved in theatrical events, and Henrietta Maria was appearing in court performances and attending the Blackfriars theatre, the targets of Prynne’s diatribe and the implications of his punishment are more

³⁶ BL Add. MS 72439 (Trumbull Papers Vol. CXCVIII), fol.6. Quoted in Anthony Thompson, ‘Licensing the Press: The Career of G.R. Weckherlin during the Personal Rule of Charles I’, *The Historical Journal*, 41:3 (1998), 653-78 (pp.668).

³⁷ BL Add. MS 72439, fol.8. Quoted in Thompson, p.668.

³⁸ Butler, pp.84-85.

extensive and complex. As Martin Butler describes, *Histrionmastix* is less of a specific attack on the theatres, and more an outspoken condemnation of society in general.³⁹ Few topics escape Prynne's censure, and through his vitriolic outpouring, he can be seen as symbolizing a burgeoning threat of opposition and direct criticism. While Prynne's theatrical targeting in the context of royal support and participation in such activities is certainly significant, it is only one aspect of his attack; as related in the court proceedings, 'the truthe is, Mr. Pryn would have a newe church, newe governmente, a newe kinge, for hee would make the people altogether offended with all thinges att the present'.⁴⁰ Far from Prynne's public prosecution offering a straightforward vindication of the theatre, it is more clearly an act of suppressing and silencing an outspoken critic. Prynne's punishment functions, paradoxically, as both a defence of theatrical activities and as a warning of the dangers of direct commentary and representation.

Records of events and surviving accounts from the 1630s reveal a growing monarchical interest in discovering what was said about matters of state and suppressing dangerous criticism. As Anthony Thompson observes, Charles evidently 'construed "matters of state" very broadly', considering almost any political discussion or recounting of continental news as a 'scandall of government and disadvantage of our service'.⁴¹ Such attempts at suppression were not always successful, thorough or consistent, but the omnipresence of censorship shaped both dramatic and non-dramatic texts, and provided one possible motivation for the appropriation of classical and temporally-distant histories on stage throughout the 1630s.

Another significant influence in shaping historical dramatizations, however, was royal interest and involvement in the theatre as a means of political engagement, especially in connection with the court of Henrietta Maria. During the 1630s, while the queen acted in plays and

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Samuel Rawson Gardiner (ed.), *Documents Relating to the Proceedings Against William Prynne in 1634 and 1637* (London: Camden Society, 1877), p.16.

⁴¹ Thompson, pp.668-69; BL Add. MS 72439, fol.6.

attended the Blackfriars playhouse, her court became the locus for certain disaffected aristocrats who had boycotted Charles's court because they resented the influence of his favourites, including William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. Indeed, Henrietta Maria acquired a reputation for political intriguing, and by 1636, she was campaigning for a French alliance and taking an aggressive stance towards Spain, sympathizing with militant Protestant aristocrats who were concerned with the growth of Spanish and Catholic power in Europe. Until 1637, when Henrietta Maria realigned her position in favour of a Spanish alliance, discontented aristocrats viewed her as 'a lever through which pressure could be brought against Charles for alternative policies'.⁴² Her court was particularly associated with the 'platonic' drama of 1632-36. As Butler has argued, these plays, such as William Cartwright's *The Royal Slave* (1639), frequently use romance sources or distant, often legendary, histories, and can be seen as engaging with current political debates, rather than being mere vehicles of escapism.⁴³

A similar privileging of romance sources and loosely historical accounts appears in professional drama throughout the 1630s, possibly influenced by the politicization of Neoplatonism at Henrietta Maria's court and the increasing involvement of courtiers, such as Lodowick Carlell, as dramatists for the commercial companies.⁴⁴ As a monarch, Charles lacked the developed iconography and ceremonial propaganda of his predecessors, Elizabeth and James, even neglecting an official ceremonial entrance into London on the occasion of his succession in 1625. While Elizabeth had used elaborate summer progresses and extensive literary and iconographic stylings as Gloriana, Cynthia, Astraea, and the Virgin Queen, and James had promoted his reign through the invocation of legendary British histories, Charles refrained from similar engagements.⁴⁵ It was only gradually, in the 1630s, that Charles's reign

⁴² Butler, p.27.

⁴³ Butler, pp.25-54.

⁴⁴ Butler, pp.25-35, 268.

⁴⁵ Peter Sillitoe, "'Majesty Had Wont to Sit Inthron'd within Those Glorious Walls': Whitehall, Monarchical Absence and Royalist Nostalgia', *Seventeenth Century*, 25:1 (2010), 117-42 (pp.117-19) and "'Where the Prince Lieth': Courtly Space and the Elizabethan Progresses', in *Tudor Court Culture*,

became ideologically associated with a chaste and family-orientated court, which can be seen in the politicization of romance sources and sexual morality that feature in plays from this period, including Davenant's *The Fair Favourite* (performed 1638, printed 1673).⁴⁶ Historical sources are displaced by romance themes, which retain a significant political import, revealing a macrocosm of contemporary debates and concerns through the microcosm of dramatic engagements.

An alternative theatrical locus to the court of Henrietta Maria can be identified, which also involves plays that feature distant histories. Philip Herbert, who succeeded his brother, William, as earl of Pembroke in 1630, had been invested with the chamberlainship in August 1626 and was emerging as an influential patron, who had a lasting interest in the utility of the theatre. Indeed, the continued influence of the Herbert family is particularly significant for understanding patterns of performance and publication throughout the Jacobean and Caroline periods, as discussed previously in relation to Butler's interest in Philip Herbert as a nominal dedicatee of his publications (Chapter 3) and the involvement of William Herbert as Lord Chamberlain during the late Jacobean period (Chapter 4). As suggested by his familial connections and the joint dedication addressed to him and William, prefacing Shakespeare's First Folio (1623) and Second Folio (1632), Philip was most closely associated with the King's Men, who continued to be the main performers of historical plays throughout the 1630s. Philip (hereafter Pembroke) was involved with the King's Men, though perhaps not as extensively as his brother. He protected their interests, writing to the Stationers' Company in 1637, for example, to remind them of his brother's previous command 'to take Order for the stay of any further Impression of any of the Playes or Interludes of his Majesties servantes without their consentes', and reasserting the need to have permission from the King's Men in order to

ed. by Thomas Betteridge and Anna Riehl (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2010), pp.75-92.

⁴⁶ Mark Kishlansky and John Morrill, 'Charles I (1600–1649), king of England, Scotland, and Ireland', *ODNB*, para.41-44; Butler, pp.57-59.

publish.⁴⁷ Extant records suggest that Pembroke was also the patron of the company's leading dramatist from 1625 to 1640, Philip Massinger, who regularly referred to the Herbert family in playbook paratexts, and dedicated a significant proportion of his printed works to the Herberts or to other aristocrats (including Lady Katherine Stanhope; George Berkeley, eighth Baron Berkeley; and John Mohun, first Baron Mohun) who were associated with the Herberts by marriage or political persuasion.⁴⁸ Also suggestive of a close relationship, Massinger's manuscript poem 'Sero, sed serio' (1636) was written on the death of Pembroke's son, Charles, and begins with an address and apology to 'my most singular good Lord and Patron' for his failure to write a poem in honour of the happier occasion of Pembroke's marriage in 1630.⁴⁹

This evidence for a connection between Pembroke, the King's Men, and Massinger, the company's leading dramatist during the Caroline period, gains in significance when considering the political context of these associations. Pembroke, a volatile and outspoken aristocrat at court, was, like his brother, William, antipathetic towards Spanish alliances and Catholic influence, but was not part of Henrietta Maria's coterie of disaffected peers, as both the queen and Pembroke shared a mutual dislike of each other.⁵⁰ Indeed, Butler has argued that Massinger's *The Bashful Lover* (licensed for the stage on 9 May 1636 and published in 1655) criticizes the political intriguing associated with Henrietta Maria as 'unhelpful trifling with serious affairs', and that through this play, Massinger may be reflecting the views of his

⁴⁷ E.K. Chambers (ed.), 'Dramatic Records: The Lord Chamberlain's Office', *Collections Vol. II Part III*, Malone Society (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), pp.321-416 (p.384).

⁴⁸ Of the thirteen editions of Massinger's plays published between 1629 and 1639, nine contain dedicatory epistles and five are dedicated to the Pembroke circle, namely *The Renegado* (to George Berkeley, eighth Baron Berkeley) in 1630, *The Emperor of the East* (to John Mohun, first Baron Mohun) in 1632, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (to Robert Dormer, first earl of Carnarvon) in 1633, *The Duke of Milan* (to Lady Katherine Stanhope) in 1638, and *The Bondman* (to Philip Herbert) in 1638. Dormer was Philip Herbert's son-in-law, and Stanhope, Berkeley (related by marriage), and Mohun (Stanhope's son-in-law) were connected by political persuasion to the Herberts. Moreover, Stanhope was, as Martin Garrett discusses, Massinger's first known patron. See Garrett, para.12.

⁴⁹ Royal MS 18 A XX, fol.1-4. Printed in *The Plays of Philip Massinger*, ed. by William Gifford, 4 vols (London: Nicol et al, 1813), IV, pp.596-98. The poem remained in manuscript until 1761.

⁵⁰ Smith, 'Herbert', para.8.

patron.⁵¹ Pembroke, along with Massinger, could be seen as forming an alternative theatrical network, with Massinger's plays for the King's Men offering, through their classical and remote settings, criticism of official policies and practices, removed from the court of Henrietta Maria, but paralleling her own political intriguing which encouraged a receptiveness to 'opposition' points of view.⁵²

Expanding this network of connections, one of Pembroke's cousins was the poet, historian, and dramatist William Habington, who, in about 1640, wrote *The Queen of Aragon*, a courtly play that was first performed by Pembroke and his family servants, and later by the King's Men at the Blackfriars. As Butler points out, the play's protagonists, the Aragonese, were 'reputed to swear only conditional allegiance to their monarch' and could take action against their ruler, which provided a timely precedent for monarchical opposition; in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), John Milton cited the Aragonese as an example against Charles when he was sentenced to death.⁵³ In April 1640, Pembroke, as Lord Chamberlain, arranged for two Whitehall performances of *The Queen of Aragon*, which were attended by Charles and Henrietta Maria, and can be seen as providing a platform for political application, especially given the play's performance timing, which was designed immediately to precede (by four days) the reconvening of parliament after eleven years, making it one of the last plays performed during the Personal Rule.

Pembroke's involvement can possibly be detected in Heywood and Brome's *Late Lancashire Witches*, first performed in 1634 by the King's Men. The play dramatizes events surrounding the Lancashire witch trials in 1634, which had attracted considerable attention. Twenty-one people were charged in the Pendle area on the testimony of a young boy, Edmund Robinson, and his father, of whom twenty were found guilty at the Lancashire assizes in March 1634.

⁵¹ Butler, p.54.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.35.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.70; *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (Wing M2181, 1649), B2v.

The judges, however, referred the case to the Privy Council, and in June 1634, four of the accused women and the two witnesses travelled to London for trial. While Edmund Robinson confessed that his accusations were a fiction, the women and witnesses remained in custody over the summer, and it was not until December 1634 that records report their return to Lancashire. Heywood and Brome's play was probably first performed over the summer, when the fate of the accused women was still unknown, and aimed to capitalize on the sensation generated by the trials.⁵⁴

As critics Herbert Berry and Gurr have discussed, Heywood and Brome's extant play suggests the writers were working from copies of the condemnatory depositions that were provided to the Privy Council in 1634 and which were confidential.⁵⁵ Berry and Gurr argue that Pembroke, as a privy councillor, was one of the few people who had access to the depositions, and that he provided Heywood and Brome with the trial details. Pembroke's involvement can be more firmly traced in the embargo he effected in response to another company's attempt to dramatize similar material, shortly in advance of the first performances of *The Late Lancashire Witches*. In July 1634, the King's Men petitioned Pembroke (as Lord Chamberlain) to prevent the performance at Salisbury Court of a play that was 'intermingleing some passages of witches in old playes', which would hinder their 'designed Comedy of the Lancashire witches'.⁵⁶ In a way that suggests a close association with the company and this play in particular, Pembroke had his kinsman, Henry Herbert, suppress the Salisbury Court play.

The reason for Pembroke's interest in the witch trials was possibly connected to his antagonism towards William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was openly sceptical of

⁵⁴ The play was entered in the Stationers' Register on 28 October 1634 to Benjamin Fisher, providing a *terminus ad quem* for its first performance, with the women's arrival in London on 29 June 1634 providing the *terminus a quo*.

⁵⁵ Herbert Berry, 'The Globe Bewitched and "El Hombre Fiel"', *MRDE*, 1 (1984), 211-30; Gurr, *SPC*, pp.146-47.

⁵⁶ Bawcutt (ed.), p.189 (20 July 1634): 'A peticon of the Kings Players complayning of intermingleing some passages of witches in old playes to the preiudice of their designed Comedy of the Lancashire witches, & desiring a prohibition of any other till theirs bee allowed & Acted.'

the witchcraft accusations. As Berry argues, Pembroke was interested in using the play's condemnation of the women for his own political purposes, as their fate enabled him to further a division in the Privy Council between himself and Laud.⁵⁷ While Heywood and Brome's play does not offer a sustained and serious political critique in the same way as *A Game at Chess*, it nevertheless presents the women accused of witchcraft as guilty of their charges throughout. Running for three consecutive days at the Globe, the play seems designed to create a theatrical stir to impact upon the actual proceedings by suggesting the women were guilty. Indeed, contemporary audiences were aware of the play's application, as indicated by the testimony of Nathaniel Tomkyns, who witnessed the play:

And though there be not in it (to my good vnderstanding) any poetickall Genius, or art, or language or iudgement to state our tenet of witches (which I expected) or application to vertue but full of ribaldrie and of things improbable and impossible; yet in respect of the newnesse of the subiect (the witches being still visible and in prison here) and in regard it consisteth from the beginning to the ende of odd passages and fopperies to provoke laughter, and is mixed with diuers songs and dances, it passeth for a merrie and excellent new play.⁵⁸

While Tomkyns' account stresses the comedic aspects of the play, which may be seen as detracting from the potential for serious political commentary (as Kathleen McLuskie argues), it also highlights Tomkyns' expectation that the play would offer a direct assessment of the ongoing events, 'the witches being still visible and in prison here', and provide a 'judgement to state our tenet of witches [...] or application to virtue'.⁵⁹ Given increasing censorship efforts (including the example of Prynne) and the suppression of recent history plays with a political bearing on current events and policies (as in *Believe as You List*), 'ribaldrie' was perhaps advisable in Heywood and Brome's dramatization of the witch trials (as well as being representative of their other plays and dramatic styles). Nevertheless, Tomkyns' account indicates that, given the play's current subject matter, a topical commentary would be sought by audiences. His testimony draws attention to an expectation of application and suggests

⁵⁷ Berry, pp.220-23.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.212-13.

⁵⁹ Kathleen E. McLuskie, 'Politics and Aesthetic Pleasure in 1630s Theatre', in *Localizing Caroline Drama*, pp.43-68 (p.45).

that, regardless of Heywood and Brome's treatment, such a play would inevitably engage with contemporary debates. In addition to presenting an opposing stance on the issue of witchcraft to that of William Laud, who was coming under increasing scrutiny as he emerged as Charles's next royal favourite, the play may have encouraged drawing connections with the witch trials that had been taking place on the continent and that seemed allied to the unfolding events and Catholic reconquests of the Thirty Years' War.⁶⁰

In summary, history plays first performed during the 1630s appropriated a range of different historical materials, attempting to engage in contemporary political commentary within a context of increasing censorship and monarchical concern over the representation of matters of state. These negotiations can be witnessed in plays such as *The Late Lancashire Witches* and *Believe as You List*, and, through the influence of the theatrical developments and the politicization of romance sources associated with the court of Henrietta Maria, a range of classical and loosely historical subjects characterize history plays from the 1630s. The King's Men occupy a central position through their leading dramatist, Massinger, and the occasional involvement of Philip Herbert, both in his role as Lord Chamberlain and as an independently-motivated aristocratic patron.

First-edition history plays during the 1630s: The importance of the paratext

During the 1630s, early modern history plays reached their apex of print publication in terms of edition numbers, a pattern which is echoed in the overall publication of professional playbooks at this time.⁶¹ However, within this peak in production, a striking division can be observed between the patterns and agents relating to first editions and those connected to the publication of reprints. Described by Farmer and Lesser as the 'Caroline paradox', this period witnessed the greatest number of printed playbook editions, with playbooks 'rising rapidly as

⁶⁰ See H.C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562-1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), pp.121-63.

⁶¹ Cf. Farmer and Lesser, 'Popularity', p.27.

a proportion of the entire trade', at the same time as reprint rates declined considerably, only 11 of the 122 professional plays first printed between 1626 and 1640 being reprinted within twenty years.⁶² This division seems to suggest, paradoxically, that playbooks became both more and less popular during the Caroline period. However, as Farmer and Lesser argue, this apparent contradiction points instead to changing structures of popularity and patterns in stationer involvement, which have significant implications for understanding the Caroline history play in print.⁶³

During the 1630s, one group of stationers tended to focus on the publication of first editions, the vast majority of which were never reprinted, and a second group of stationers concentrated on reprints of older plays that had already established a readers' market. As Lesser and Farmer observe, the market for first editions 'seems to have been driven by customers' desire for novelty', while the reprint market 'depended on customers' attachment to particular "classics", most of them dating from around the turn of the century'.⁶⁴ This tendency towards both novelty and the development of a Caroline canon of classic plays influenced the selection and publication of history plays. It has also shaped subsequent critical appraisals of Caroline history plays (on stage and in print), which tend to be dismissive of the period. This evaluation can perhaps be linked to the relative absence of Caroline drama in the emerging canon of classic plays during the 1630s, which favours Elizabethan and Jacobean texts.

Paralleling patterns identified in Chapter 3 and 4, the reprint market for history plays during the 1630s was dominated by Shakespeare's histories, originally published by Andrew Wise in the late 1590s (and later by Matthew Law and John Norton), and by the early Jacobean 'election' plays, first published by Nathaniel Butter between 1605 and 1609. These plays had proved their continuing popularity with readers, as judged by their reprint rates, and they were

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp.27-28.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.28.

among the most popular plays in print during the early modern period: *I Henry IV* reached its ninth edition in 1639, while the eighth quartos of *I If You Know Not Me* and *Richard III* were printed in 1639 and 1634, respectively, the sixth quarto of *Richard II* was printed in 1634, and the fourth quartos of *2 If You Know Not Me* and *When You See Me You Know Me* were published in 1633 and 1632, respectively. Shakespeare's histories continued to be printed in single-text editions after their publication in two complete folios in 1623 and 1632, which suggests that readers were interested in these specific titles. Moreover, the original quartos continued to be used as copy texts for the single editions, revealing that the Folio (and its 'True Orignall Copies') did not diminish the position of other textual witnesses in the book trade, and demonstrating the ongoing importance of shorter and more affordable quarto-edition playbooks. Published throughout the 1630s by the same two stationers, Butter and Norton, these English history plays featuring late-medieval and Tudor monarchs can be seen as forming a nascent canon of early modern history plays that privileges Elizabethan and Jacobean texts and a narrow historical focus, a tendency which has been furthered by subsequent critical studies.

In contrast, very few first-edition Caroline history plays had second editions, demonstrating, as Farmer and Lesser argue for all playbook first editions, that this market was dominated by a demand for novelty. While the reprint market concentrated on English monarchical history, the stationers involved in the publication of first editions favoured a wider range of histories, although an emphasis on classical subjects and plots that have a looser connection to historical sources can be detected. This pattern parallels the use of temporally distant settings for political debate and discussion during the period. First-edition playbooks regularly highlight their potential for political commentary through the incorporation of elaborate paratextual materials that suggest a particular application. The absence of such paratexts in the reprinted editions from Butter and Norton further distinguish and separate these two strands of history plays. The reprints can be seen as gesturing towards a canon of plays that privilege English history, whereas the first editions, with their paratextual claims to topicality and the fact that

they are rapidly superseded, suggest a parallel with ephemeral news accounts that incorporate a range of different voices and are produced by a fragmented network of stationers.

Changes in theatrical control, including the increasing influence of company impresarios and the Master of the Revels, impacted upon the publication of new plays, shaping subsequent critical views of Caroline drama. To a greater extent than during the late Jacobean period (which witnessed some attempts at publication control on behalf of theatrical companies), developments during the Caroline period removed considerable agency from the stationers, relocating it with individuals who had differing agendas and attitudes towards publication. Repeated attempts were made to restrict the publication of first editions: in the letter previously referred to from Pembroke to the Stationers' Company, dated 10 June 1637, the earl commanded the stationers 'to take Order for the stay of any further Impression of any of the Playes or Interludes of his Majestes servantes without their consentes', clarifying the reasons for his involvement:

I am informed that some Coppyes of Playes belonging to the King & Queenes servantes the Players, & purchased by them at Deare rates, haueing beene lately stollen or gotten from them by indirect meanes are now attempted to bee printed & that some of them are at the Presse & ready to bee printed, which if it should bee suffered, would directly tend to their apparent Detriment & great preiudice & to the disenabling of them to doe their Majestes service.⁶⁵

The Stationers' Company was required to prohibit the further publication of playbooks by its members unless they had 'some Certificate in writeing vnder the handes of Iohn Lowen & Ioseph Taylor for the Kings servantes & of Christopher Bieston for the Kings & Queenes young Company'.⁶⁶ The agents referred to in this attempt at publication restriction indicate that both the King's Men and Beeston (the impresario in control of Queen Henrietta Maria's Men and Beeston's Boys) occupied central positions in determining the propagation of plays. While a similar request had been issued by William Herbert in 1619 (as discussed in Chapter 4), this was only in relation to the King's Men. Indeed, Gurr singles out the 1637 order as

⁶⁵ Chambers (ed.), 'Chamberlain's Office', p.385.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.385.

‘the first record of the companies using officialdom to protect their rights over their playbooks’.⁶⁷ This order, perhaps more specifically, draws attention to the pivotal influence of impresarios over playbook publication, as it was Beeston, rather than either of his companies, who claimed ownership of the plays. When Henrietta Maria’s Men were moved to Salisbury Court in 1637, they did not take their repertory of plays with them, which passed to the incoming Beeston’s Boys at the Cockpit. An order from the Lord Chamberlain in 1639, prompted by Beeston’s son, William, records this transferral of plays, which protected the new company’s exclusive right to forty-five play titles, some of which dated back to Queen Anne’s Men.⁶⁸

During the Caroline period, control over the publication of some professional plays (predominately first-editions connected to the King’s Men and Queen Henrietta Maria’s Men) seems to have been transferred from the stationers to the companies and their impresarios, brought about through the intervention of specific authorities, such as the Lord Chamberlain and the Master of the Revels. As a result, fewer consistent patterns emerge in relation to stationer involvement in the publication of first editions. This apparent fragmentation of influence can be further detected in a division within first-edition publication patterns. During the 1630s, a significant number of plays originally written and performed in either the Elizabethan or Jacobean period were printed for the first time, including Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* in 1633, published by Nicholas Vavasour. The category of first-edition playbooks can be subdivided into those plays written, performed, and published within the Caroline period (such as *The Emperor of the East* [first performed 1631, printed 1632]), and those that had been part of an older theatrical tradition, but were belatedly published (such as *The Noble Spanish Soldier* [first performed 1622, printed 1634]; see Appendix A for further examples). Some of these older plays were, however, revived during the 1630s, which provides, as Lucy Munro discusses, a possible motivation for their publication and also suggests a performance

⁶⁷ Gurr, *SPC*, p.382.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Gurr, *SPC*, pp.424-25.

link with the new Caroline plays.⁶⁹ *The Jew of Malta*, for example, was revived at the Cockpit shortly before its 1633 publication, and Henry Chettle's *Hoffman* (written in 1602 on the basis of a payment in Henslowe's *Diary*) is described on its 1631 title page as having been 'diuers times acted with great applause, at the Phenix in Druery-lane'.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, an examination of publication patterns (as shown by Appendix A) reveals that different groups of stationers were responsible for the two types of first-edition publications and for the reprinted editions, which suggests that publishers were specializing along these lines when investing in professional plays.

The consistent inclusion of elaborate paratexts to position a playbook unites these diverse first editions, providing them with a degree of uniformity and visual similitude. During the 1630s, extensive paratextual materials, including dedicatory epistles, commendatory verses, and addresses to the reader, were regularly affixed to professional playbooks. While some earlier playbooks, including Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* in 1590 (published by Richard Jones), Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* in 1600 (published by William Holme), Marston's *The Malcontent* in 1604 (published by William Aspley), Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* in 1609 (published by Richard Bonian and Henry Walley), and Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* in 1623 (published by John Waterson), had contained elaborate paratexts, most playbooks printed before 1629 had not, limiting their prefatory materials to a title page and, sometimes, a character list. During the Caroline period, this pattern changed considerably, and from 1629 onwards, most first editions contained extensive paratexts. Between 1629 and 1642, 124 first editions were published and, of these, 114 (or 92%) contained paratextual materials in addition to a title page. In comparison, of the 142 first editions printed between 1600 and 1628, only 70 (or 49%) contained similar paratexts.⁷¹ These statistics reveal both the pronounced increase in first editions published from 1629 onwards, and the importance of dedications, epistles, and

⁶⁹ Lucy Munro, 'Marlowe on the Caroline Stage', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 27:1 (2009), 39-50 (pp.40-42).

⁷⁰ Chettle, *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (STC 5125, 1631), A1r.

⁷¹ Statistics have been calculated using *DEEP*. The more extensive paratextual materials considered by this calculation include dedications, epistles, commendatory verses, and character and actor lists.

commendatory verses as part of a play's printed presentation. Most of these paratexts were contributed by dramatists. While the increased number of authorial paratexts appearing on the bookstalls does not divest stationers of their agency in the collection and promotion of this material, it draws attention to the growing importance of authors in shaping a play's transmission and positioning in print, and to changing ideas of playbook presentation.

To a greater degree than their Elizabethan and Jacobean counterparts, Caroline playbooks were refashioned through their paratexts. In the context of increasing censorship efforts, these materials offered a means of encouraging associations with contemporary individuals and events, and emerge as a crucial site for negotiating a play's topical applications. Until 1637, there was no requirement for paratextual materials to be authorized; they provided a platform for direct and unregulated commentary, and afforded greater liberality in comparison to the main text. The Star Chamber decree of 1637, which added 'Titles, Epistles, Prefaces, Proems, Preambles, Introductions, Tables, [and] Dedications' to the list of items that required authorization prior to publication, indicates a growing awareness of their interpretative influence and ability to position a text.⁷²

The importance of paratextual materials is clearly witnessed in Hugh Beeston's 1634 publication of Ford's *Perkin Warbeck*. Probably first written and performed during the 1630s, Ford's 'Chronicle Historie' dramatizes the monarchical claims of Perkin Warbeck, a pretender to the English throne, who challenged the authority of Henry VII by declaring he was Richard Plantagenet, duke of York (the second son of Edward IV, who had disappeared in 1483).

⁷² From *A Decree of Starre-Chamber, Concerning Printing, Made the eleuenth day of July last past* (1637): 'That no person or persons whatsoever, shall at any time print or cause to be imprinted, any Booke or Pamphlet whatsoever, vnlesse the same Booke or Pamphlet, and also all and euery the Titles, Epistles, Prefaces, Proems, Preambles, Introductions, Tables, Dedications, and other matters and things whatsoever thereunto annexed, or therewith imprinted, shall be first lawfully licenced and authorized onely by such person and persons as are hereafter expressed, and by no other, and shall be also first entred into the Registers Booke of the Company of Stationers; vpon paine that euery Printer offending therein, shall be for euer hereafter disabled to use or exercise the Art or Mysterie of Printing, and receiue such further punishment, as by this Court or the high Commission Court respectiue, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought fitting.' Arber, IV, pp.528-30.

While the historical Warbeck confessed he was an imposter, Ford's play reshapes the chronicle and pamphlet accounts to give a relatively sympathetic portrayal of Warbeck's career in which the protagonist is fully invested in his own claim that he is the rightful heir to the English throne.⁷³ *Perkin Warbeck* was performed by Queen Henrietta Maria's Men and offers a remarkably ambiguous presentation of Warbeck's rebellion against Henry VII, the inaugurator of the Tudor dynasty. Although Warbeck appears naïve and misguided in his claims, and the play concludes with his execution, described as purging the state 'of corrupted bloud' (L1r), Warbeck is also presented as heroically resolved in pursuing his claim, engaging the admiration of the soldiers and leaders he encounters.

The framing devices for *Perkin Warbeck* in its printed edition, including the prologue, epilogue, title page, Ford's dedication to William Cavendish, and the various commendatory verses, offer a specific view of the central protagonist that refashions the play as an exemplum of heroic resistance and a possible challenge to monarchical authority. The prologue describes the play as 'A Historie of noble mention', presenting 'braue Attempts, as ever, fertile Rage | In action, could beget to grace the Stage' (A4v), and the epilogue removes any notion of the play's resolution (involving Warbeck's execution as a rebel) ensuring lasting national stability:

Here has appear'd, though in a severall fashion,
The Threats of Majestie; the strength of passion;
Hopes of an Empire; change of fortunes; All
What can to Theaters of Greatnesse fall;
Proving their weake foundations. [Epilogue, L1v]

Assembled and positioned for the first time in the printing house, as Stern has described, the prologue and epilogue from *Perkin Warbeck* closely relate to the paratextual commendations, which draw attention to the instability of monarchical government, while praising Ford for

⁷³ As discussed by Marion Lomax, Ford's main historical sources seem to have been Francis Bacon's *History of the Reign of King Henry VII* (1622) and Thomas Gainsford's *True and Wonderful History of Perkin Warbeck* (1618), although he may also have used Hall's *Union of the two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (1548) and William Warner's *Albion's England* (1586). See John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays*, ed. by Marion Lomax (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. xxi.

‘The GLORIOVS PERKIN, and thy Poet’s Art | Equall with His, in playing the KINGS PART’ (Ralph Eure, A3v).⁷⁴ The play’s extensive paratexts offer a consistent interpretation that celebrates resistance, as in the commendatory verses by George Crymes:

Perkin is rediviu’d by thy strong hand,
And crownd a King of new; the vengefull wand
Of Greatnesse is forgot: His Execution
May rest vn-mention’d, and His birth’s Collusion
Lye buried in the Storie: But His fame
Thou hast eterniz’d; made a Crowne His Game.
His loftie spirit soares yet. [A3v]

These lines gloss over the specifics of Warbeck’s life, including his execution and birth (which would have drawn attention to his position as an imposter and usurper), and focus instead on abstracted notions of Warbeck’s ‘lofty spirit’ and eternized fame, which stem from his single-minded challenging of monarchical authority. Published in 1634 and coinciding with increasing amounts of domestic and European conflicts and the suppression of direct commentary in the form of serial newsbooks (between 1632 and 1638), *Perkin Warbeck* could be easily appropriated to explore ideas of resistance and opposition. Indeed, this potential is suggested by Henry Herbert’s censorship of the play in print: Herbert only allowed the publication of *Perkin Warbeck* on 24 February 1634 subject to specific reformations, ‘observing the Caution in the License’.⁷⁵ Direct attempts at political positioning are visible within the paratexts of the 1634 edition, and this use of paratextual materials to provide a local reading of a text which relates to contemporary politics can be witnessed in many first-edition Caroline plays.

While not containing the extensive paratexts of *Perkin Warbeck*, Heywood and Brome’s *Late Lancashire Witches* similarly announces its topicality most directly through its framing materials, including the title page, prologue, and epilogue, features which – although fluid in performance – acquired fixity in print. As discussed previously, the play dramatizes current (and ongoing) events, and possibly reflects the intervention of the Herberts, suggesting a

⁷⁴ Stern, *Documents*, ch.4.

⁷⁵ Bawcutt (ed.), p.53.

parallel with the late Jacobean play, *A Game at Chess*. However, while the Herberts may have been involved in procuring source material for Heywood and Brome, the dramatic handling of the notorious witchcraft trial does not suggest a project of serious political application analogous to *A Game at Chess*.

Perhaps to capitalize on its topicality, *The Late Lancashire Witches* was rushed into print in 1634, shortly after its first performance and the witchcraft trials in London. Printed by Thomas Harper for Benjamin Fisher, the play's title, presented in large type on the quarto title page, predicts the fate of and possibly offers a judgement of the accused women. The town records of Bridgnorth, Staffordshire indicate that the women were acquitted and started their return to Lancashire in December 1634, so it is not clear whether their reprieve was assured or had taken place by the time of the play's publication (it was entered in the Stationers' Register on 28 October 1634, and appeared on the London bookstalls at some point before the end of the year). Regardless of the precise timing, the quarto title assumes the guilt of the women, which is all the more striking if their release was imminently expected. Gabriel Egan has argued that the play was known in performance as 'The Witches of Lancashire', which he adopts as the title of his 2002 edition, supported by the contemporary description from Nathaniel Tomkyns, the Stationers' Register entry to Benjamin Fisher for 'a Play called The Witches of Lancasheire &c.', and the running title of one of the extant copies.⁷⁶ Therefore, it is likely that the quarto's use of the adjectival 'late' is a defining characteristic of the play *in print*, the semantic ambiguity of the adjective indicating the play's engagement with the recent witch trials and prophesizing the fate of the dramatized witches. The printed title page can be seen as propagating an assessment of the protagonists' guilt that possibly relates to the political interests of the Herbert family.

⁷⁶ Richard Brome and Thomas Heywood, *The Witches of Lancashire*, ed. by Gabriel Egan, Globe Quartos (London: Globe Education and Nick Hern Books, 2002) pp.x-xi; Arber, IV, p.329.

The prologue and epilogue printed in *The Late Lancashire Witches* also provide a commentary on the current events dramatized in the play. The epilogue proclaims the guilt of the historical women, observing that the ‘Witches must expect their due | By lawfull Iustice’, although ‘what their crime | May bring upon’ em, ripenes yet of time | Has not reveal’d’.⁷⁷ The play itself loosely follows the events and testimonies from the Lancashire and London trials, and Heywood and Brome emphasize the comic aspects of their plot. The framing devices, however, offer a sombre and reflective assessment of the play’s historical parallels. Indeed, the prologue even gestures towards the wider political context of the Thirty Years’ War, and the recent suppression of serial newsbooks:

Corrantoës failing, and no foot post late
Possessing us with Newes of forraine State,
No accidents abroad worthy Relation
Arriving here, we are forc’d from our owne Nation
To ground the Scene that’s now in agitation. [A4r]

This prologue has been read by critics, including McLuskie, as announcing the limited significance of the play’s events in the context of the continental religious wars, presenting ‘An Argument so thin, persons so low | Can neither yeeld much matter, nor great show’ (A4r).⁷⁸ Alternatively, the prologue could be seen as drawing a connection to the ongoing political conflicts on the continent. Rather than diminishing the significance of these trials and accusations, the references to the Thirty Years’ War could have served to remind contemporary readers of the analogous and equally notorious witch trials and executions that had been taking place on the continent, such as those in the Bishopric of Würzburg between 1626 and 1631.⁷⁹ With this context for wider application, *The Late Lancashire Witches* anticipates a range of local readings that connect to the different agents involved in its production, from the dramatists who pursued a comic application of the historical materials, to Pembroke who possibly viewed the play as making a political statement in relation to his antagonist, William Laud, and the witchcraft accusations featuring in continental conflicts, to

⁷⁷ Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome, *The late Lancashire Witches* (STC 13373, 1634), L4r. Further references will be given after quotations.

⁷⁸ McLuskie, p.56.

⁷⁹ Midelfort, pp.121-63.

the stationers who highlighted the contemporaneity of the events through the play's printed presentation.

The emergence of a canon: Caroline reprints and re-presentations

Considering both the first-edition and reprint market is critical for understanding the position of the Caroline history play in print. As opposed to aligning historical engagement in print with either the emerging canon of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays that were regularly reprinted, or with the new first editions that featured classical and loosely-based histories, both patterns are central to discussing the development of the history play, and together these diverging trends make up the distinctive identity of the published history play during the 1630s. This decade is uniquely marked by readers' desire for novelty and for established texts, and the Caroline history play in print cannot be narrowly defined as those plays that were written and first published during the period, but must also incorporate the prominent reprint market, which features a significant number of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. To a greater extent than other periods, the Caroline market represents a conglomerate of different plays, stationers, composition dates, and publishing strategies, echoing the disparate and diverging voices of the period, and pointing to greater fragmentation in playbook publication.

The reprint market for history plays during the 1630s is mostly dominated by the publishing strategies and output of Nathaniel Butter and John Norton, both operating in St Paul's Churchyard. Butter, who retained his business premises at the Sign of the Pied Bull at St Austin's Gate, continued to invest in news publications alongside Heywood's *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody* (Part 1: Q7 1632, Q8 1639; Part 2: Q4 1633) and Rowley's *When You See Me You Know Me* (Q4 1632). From 1632, Norton, operating at the south door of St Paul's, started to publish Shakespeare's *Richard II* (Q6 1632), *Richard III* (Q8 1634), and *I Henry IV* (Q8 1632, Q9 1639), titles previously held by Matthew Law during the Jacobean and early Caroline periods. A printer by trade, Norton had been hired by Law to print *Richard*

III (Q7) in 1629, and following his marriage to Law's daughter, Alice, appears to have inherited these copyrights.

First published between 1597 and 1606, these plays had been in print for an average of thirty years, and, although the woodcut ornaments for *If You Know Not Me* had been regularly replaced with new images throughout their printing history, the paratextual materials for most of these plays remained relatively unchanged when they were reprinted in the 1630s. None of these playbooks contain prefatory addresses, dedications, commendatory verses, or character lists, which were becoming increasingly common during the Caroline period. Admittedly, playbook paratexts are a notably conservative medium: most subsequent editions retain their first-edition materials, even if their application had lost some of its relevance and the context of a particular patronage association or theatrical reference had changed. Therefore, it is not necessarily to be expected that Butter's and Norton's editions would alter their presentation and incorporate new paratextual materials, even in light of changing publication trends in playbooks. What is significant, however, is the sharp division that was emerging between the printed appearance of first editions and reprints in relation to their paratexts. The vast majority of first editions printed during the 1630s contained elaborate paratextual materials, and when considering the absence of these materials in Butter's and Norton's reprints, a striking visual disparity emerges between these playbooks. With their lack of elaborate paratexts, the reprinted history plays effectively participate in an older theatrical and publication tradition, seeming even more archaic and removed from the desire for novelty characterizing Caroline first editions, and further suggesting their emerging position as classic and established representatives of the history play.

As discussed, *Perkin Warbeck*, first published in 1634, claims to occupy a singular position in historical engagement during the Caroline period. However, it is perhaps through the play's paratexts, including the prologue in which these assertions are made, that *Perkin Warbeck* differs from other dramatic engagements with medieval English history. Seeing the play as

an anomaly in terms of its being a rare representative of a history play on stage is somewhat misleading. *Perkin Warbeck* is unique because of its printed presentation: it combines extensive paratextual materials with the dramatization of medieval English history, two factors that elsewhere serve to differentiate between first editions and reprints. Constituting a unique example of an English history play with elaborate paratextual materials, *Perkin Warbeck* draws attention to the emerging position of these histories as part of an older and established tradition that, through readerly interest and the practices of the stationers involved, seems embroiled in nascent canon formation.

Although the reprinted history plays of Butter and Norton lack the topical and positioning effect of extensive paratexts, these plays are still closely connected to the political developments of the Caroline period. The international Protestant victories and providential prophecies presented within these plays had particular relevance within the context of the Thirty Years' War and England's withdrawal from direct military engagement in 1630. Interest in the continental wars and enthusiasm among militant Protestants for re-engagement in the conflict, especially as a result of the intervention of Sweden under the leadership of King Gustavus Adolphus in 1630, also ensured the success of Butter's newsbooks, which favoured the Protestant allies. However, on 17 October 1632, Butter, his partner, Nicholas Bourne, and all other stationers were prohibited by a Star Chamber decree from printing and publishing 'the ordenary Gazetts and Pamphletts of newes from forraigne parts', an order which Thomas Crosfield describes as a means of ensuring that 'the peoples heades might not be filled with idle discourse'.⁸⁰ Direct commentary on continental religious and political matters, which closely correlated to domestic issues, was perhaps thought inadvisable by authorities, considering 'the great policy of England', which, according to Crosfield's assessment, is 'to keepe equall poyse or ballance betwene France, Spaine & the Low

⁸⁰ Folke Dahl, p.221; entry on 9 November 1632 from *The Diary of Thomas Crosfield*, ed. by Frederick Boas (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p.61 (fol.174r).

Countryes & incline to any for better advantage'.⁸¹ By 1 November 1632, Butter had visited Secretary Coke to plead for the resumption of coranto publication, and on 30 September 1633, he petitioned Charles I, claiming he would be 'careful in time to come that nothing dishonourable to princes in amity with his Majesty should pass the press'.⁸²

The prohibition on coranto publication was not revoked until 20 December 1638, and, significantly, it is during this intervening period that Butter issued his reprints of *If You Know Not Me* and *When You See Me You Know Me*. While it would seem logical for Butter to revisit some of his other copyrights and return to play publication during a time of newsbook suppression, these plays appear to have been carefully selected for their engagement with analogous religious and political issues. This connection is especially apparent given that the final editions of *If You Know Not Me* in 1633 (Part 2) and 1639 (Part 1) contain substantive variants that further their political topicality and reposition the plays as more firmly encouraging militant Protestant sympathies. In particular, the fourth quarto of Part 2 in 1633 contains an extended and revised ending, incorporating additional scenes relating to the Armada attack, voicing greater condemnation towards the Spanish, and further aggrandizing the English victory.⁸³ As first published in 1606, Heywood's play was notable for its muted representation of England's adversaries, whereas this revised ending introduces new scenes that contain exaggerated Spanish villains who describe England as a 'wart of Earth' that will be cast into the sea to ensure 'the vtter ruine' of its land and religion'.⁸⁴

It is possible that Heywood wrote this new ending; both parts of *If You Know Not Me* were probably performed at the Cockpit during the 1630s, which could have prompted his revision.⁸⁵ The prologue printed in Heywood's *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas* (1637) under

⁸¹ Entry on 2 December 1634 from *The Diary of Thomas Crosfield*, p.75 (fol.69v).

⁸² Rostenberg, p.29.

⁸³ Cf. Grant, 'Drama', pp.134.

⁸⁴ *If you know not me, You know no body: The Second Part* (STC 13339, 1633), I3v, I4r.

⁸⁵ Wiggins, V, p.120.

the heading ‘A Prologue to the Play of Queen Elizabeth as it was last revived at the Cock-pit, in which the Author taxeth the most corrupted copy now imprinted’ almost certainly relates to the *If You Know Not Me* plays.⁸⁶ Indeed, this prologue was later included, along with the epilogue that follows it in *Pleasant Dialogues*, in Butter’s 1639 edition of *1 If You Know Not Me*. The prologue criticizes the previous unauthorized editions of the play, claiming the text is now set ‘upright upon its feete’ and suggesting that Heywood may have returned to these plays for revision before the Cockpit performance.⁸⁷ The alternative ending to Part 2 shows convincing signs of Caroline composition, which further supports this point. As Madeleine Doran observes, details from the added scene involving the Spanish fleet probably derive from a summary that Abraham Darcie added to his translation of Camden’s *Annals*, published in 1625.⁸⁸ It is not clear whether Heywood was involved in the publication of the final editions of *If You Know Not Me*. In line with his previous practices, Butter could have procured a version of the updated ending for the 1633 edition; with the exception of the final four revised scenes, Q4 was printed using Q3 (1623) as the copy text. Indeed, Butter’s source for the prologue and epilogue attached to *1 If You Know Not Me* in 1639 was probably the printed edition of Heywood’s *Pleasant Dialogues*, which again demonstrates his active agency as a publisher in piecing together his texts.

The publishing strategies of John Norton suggest the continued relevance of Shakespeare’s histories and similarly encourage local readings that highlight a particular interpretative framework. Norton’s publications, however, differ from Butter’s strategies and political alignment, and, as Farmer argues, Norton started to publish ‘religiously heterogeneous’ texts during the 1630s that accused Puritans and militant Protestants of ‘seeking to overthrow the monarchy’.⁸⁹ Farmer sees Shakespeare’s history plays as providing ‘a certain political

⁸⁶ Thomas Heywood, *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas* (STC 13358, 1637), R4v-R5r.

⁸⁷ Heywood, *Pleasant Dialogues*, R4v.

⁸⁸ See *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody Part I*, Malone Society Reprints, No.77, ed. by Madeleine Doran (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), p.xiv-xvi.

⁸⁹ Alan Farmer, ‘John Norton and the Politics of Shakespeare’s History Plays in Caroline England’ in *Shakespeare’s Stationers*, ed. by Straznicky, pp.147-76 (p.148).

currency' in accordance with Norton's publishing strategies, because 'they dramatized the dangers of civil war during a period in which the Crown and its supporters faced several imminent threats, the most serious of which was that of rebellion by Protestant religious radicals'.⁹⁰ In the context of Norton's Caroline output, Shakespeare's histories can be read as plays that offer a warning against civil uprisings and royal opposition, and Farmer suggests that, when they were published during the 1630s, these texts 'would not have looked like radical deconstructions of royal authority or coded criticisms of Charles I'.⁹¹

The view that dramatizations of domestic rebellion were becoming increasingly aligned with a royalist position can perhaps be detected in other uses and performances of English history during the Caroline period. Shakespeare's plays featured prominently at court, and Charles I appears to have had a particular interest in them, adding interpretative comments and marginalia to his copy of the Second Folio (1632), and regularly attending court performances, including those of *1 Henry IV* on 1 January 1625 ('the prince [Charles] only being there'), *Richard III* on 17 November 1633, and *Cymbeline* on 1 January 1634.⁹² Moreover, as Farmer outlines, Charles's ardent supporters also wrote 'Royalist Rebellion' plays during the 1630s, including John Suckling's *Aglaure* (1638) and Lodowick Carlell's *Arviragus and Philicia* (Part 1 and 2, 1639), which suggests that both Shakespeare's plays and other histories concerning rebellion were becoming increasingly connected with Charles and his supporters.⁹³ Indeed, while the Caroline court lacked the developed iconography of literary and historical figures that featured prominently in the Elizabethan and early Jacobean courts, histories of specific English monarchs started to be printed under the command of Charles I during the 1630s, perhaps indicating an attempted appropriation of English history as a legitimizing and aggrandizing vehicle for monarchical promotion. Thomas May's *Reign of King Henry the*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.149.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.174.

⁹² Bawcutt (ed.), pp.159, 184-5. The performance of *1 Henry IV* is recorded as 'The First Part of Sir John Falstaff, by the king's company', presumably indicating Shakespeare's play.

⁹³ Farmer, 'Norton', pp.173-74.

Second (published by Benjamin Fisher in 1633) and *The Victorious Reign of King Edward the Third* (published by Fisher and Thomas Walkley in 1635) were printed ‘By his Majesties Command’, the latter containing a printed note from Sir John Coke, ‘Principall Secretary of State’, dated Whitehall, 17 November 1634. In this note, Coke comments that ‘I have perused this Booke, and conceive it very worthy to be published’.⁹⁴ While May’s earlier classical histories registered more divisive voices of debate, his writings during the 1630s focus on English history and pursue an association with Charles I, who described May as ‘his poet’, coming to May’s defence in 1634 when he accidentally collided with Philip Herbert, who responded by breaking his chamberlain’s staff across May’s shoulders.⁹⁵

Similar publications proliferated during the 1630s, including George Buck’s *The Great Plantagenet, Or A Continued Succession of that Royal Name, from Henry the Second, to our Sacred Sovereign King Charles* (1635), Charles Aleyn’s *The history of that wise and fortunate prince, Henry of that name the seventh* (1638), an updated edition of John Taylor’s *A Memorial of all the English Monarchs being in number 151 from Brute to King Charles* (1630), and a broadsheet illustration displaying the succession of English monarchs from Brute to Charles (*A True Chronology of all the Kings of England from Brute, the first king unto our most sacred King Charles, c.1635*). In view of this, the use of English history – especially medieval English history – could be seen as part of a delayed iconographic attempt at royalist legitimacy, providing Norton’s publication of Shakespeare’s histories with another interpretative layer. Indeed, this localization of English history at court and in connection to publications issued under the command of Charles I perhaps encouraged the staging of alternative histories on stage that did not carry similar associations during the 1630s.

⁹⁴ Thomas May, *The Victorious Reigne of King Edward the Third* (STC 17719, 1635), A2r, A4v.

⁹⁵ Norbrook, ‘May’, para.4.

Conclusions

The Personal Rule of Charles I coincided with the most pronounced peak in the publication of history plays during the early modern period. While previous studies of history plays have tended to neglect the 1630s, the uses and presentation of the past on stage and in print occupied a prominent, but fragmenting, position. A range of different voices and agents of control occupy important positions in the development of historical dramas. Heightened censorship and the influence of Henrietta Maria's court encouraged an emphasis on temporally distant settings, diversifying the presentations of the late Jacobean period, which favoured recent events. The publication patterns of history plays further this sense of fragmentation, and a division emerges between first-edition and reprinted playbooks, and the different stationers associated with each grouping. Perhaps more than in earlier periods, printed playbooks from the 1630s directly position their plays and suggest local readings through their paratextual materials and publication timings, influenced by patterns in readers' interests, changes in the market for first and reprint editions, and the emergence of elaborate paratexts as more regular features of playbooks.

The increasing division between the first-edition and reprint markets also precipitated the beginnings of a canon of history plays. The regularly reprinted editions published by Norton and Butter reveal the emergence of a group of 'classic' history plays by Shakespeare, Heywood, and Rowley, which were some of the most successful playbooks of the period on the basis of edition numbers. While not necessarily part of a specific design in canon formation, and probably arising from a publishing strategy that aimed to capitalize on the success of already-proven playbooks, the exclusive reprint specialization of Butter and Norton introduced a clear distinction between the greater novelty of the first-edition market, involving extensive playbook paratexts, and the more established and steady reprint market, visually differentiated by the frequent lack of elaborate paratextual materials. The Caroline period witnessed the formation of a nascent canon of history plays, and while the historical dramas of Heywood and Rowley have been largely neglected by later studies, the critical focus on

English monarchical histories as constituting the most significant and enduring representatives of historical engagement on stage has carried on through the dominance of Shakespeare's plays, which became further established as emerging canonical texts through the publication of the Second Folio in 1632.

Epilogue

I am a scribled forme, drawne with a pen
Vpon a Parchment, and against this fire
Do I shrink vp.

King John, 1623¹

As part of his final lines in the play, the dying King John compares himself to a shrivelling manuscript caught in the fire, recognizing the transience of his own existence, which contrasts with the rhetoric and iconography of monarchy that promote an assumption of continuance. John's comparison also draws attention to the impermanence of written documents: while they provide a means of ordering, recording, and preserving the past, such materials are also subject to decay and destruction. Throughout, this study has navigated extant records, plays, and other documents of publication and performance to offer an alternative account of the history play that is alert to a fluidity in definition, purpose, and reception, and to the impermanence of many forms of engagement. The limited records of performance repertoires, publication networks, and patronage connections do not necessarily point towards historical absences, but, instead, archival ones, in which traces of these influences, agents, and responses have disappeared. In pursuing a fuller understanding of the position and utility of the history play, this study has prioritized the evidence that can be gleaned from frequently neglected sources, including playbook paratexts, publication patterns, physical geographies, and records of lost plays, and through which overlooked forms of participation and negotiation can be detected over the *longue durée*.

In doing so, this study has not proposed a single definition of the 'history play', attempted to delineate fixed characteristics of the genre, or outlined a trajectory of development that parallels historiographical precedents (as other studies have done), but, instead, has pursued evidence for synchronic readings from a range of influential agents. Supported by both the fluidity and

¹ In Shakespeare, *Comedies, Histories & Tragedies*, b5v.

ubiquity of early modern ideas of history and historiography, a broader conception of the 'history play' has been promoted, looking beyond the critically dominant model of Shakespeare's First Folio, which provides a retrospective categorization of plays from one (attributed) dramatist. Throughout the period, the history play is a regularly negotiated but elusive form, frequently blurring the assumed boundaries between other dramatic genres, including comedy and tragedy, as well as non-dramatic engagements with the past.

While the five case studies presented here do not offer a linear narrative or comprehensive account of the history play, they draw attention to significant local engagements, as well as wider issues of performance, publication, and patronage that have implications beyond the study of history plays. This thesis has concentrated on repertory companies, publishers, and patrons as the agents who were most influential in the development and transmission of the history play, and their interactions provide evidence of the synchronic engagements and readings that this account aims to privilege. Chapter 1 has shown how history plays occupied a central position in the burgeoning market for professional playbooks and how stationers shaped these plays through their paratexts. In particular, the history plays published by Thomas Creede suggest a promotion of Protestant legitimacy and stability that aligns with formative influences for the Queen's Men and creates an identity for the company in print. Chapter 2 has demonstrated that the prominence of Shakespeare's English histories during the late 1590s (and in subsequent criticism) largely stems from a publication network involving Andrew Wise, George Carey, and the Chamberlain's Men (with Shakespeare as their leading dramatist), and that patterns in publication and attribution suggest these plays were read (especially by Wise) as amenable to their patron's interests and responsive to wider publication patterns in the London book trade, which encouraged the utilization of medieval histories to explore the growing tensions of the late Elizabethan period. In contrast, Henslowe's records of lost plays reveal that a greater variety of historical dramatizations appeared on the London stages at this time. These plays are unrepresented in print, pointing towards the different agendas and conditions of publication and performance, aspects which are often neglected in history play

studies, but have significant implications for navigating the archival absences that dominate this period of theatre history.

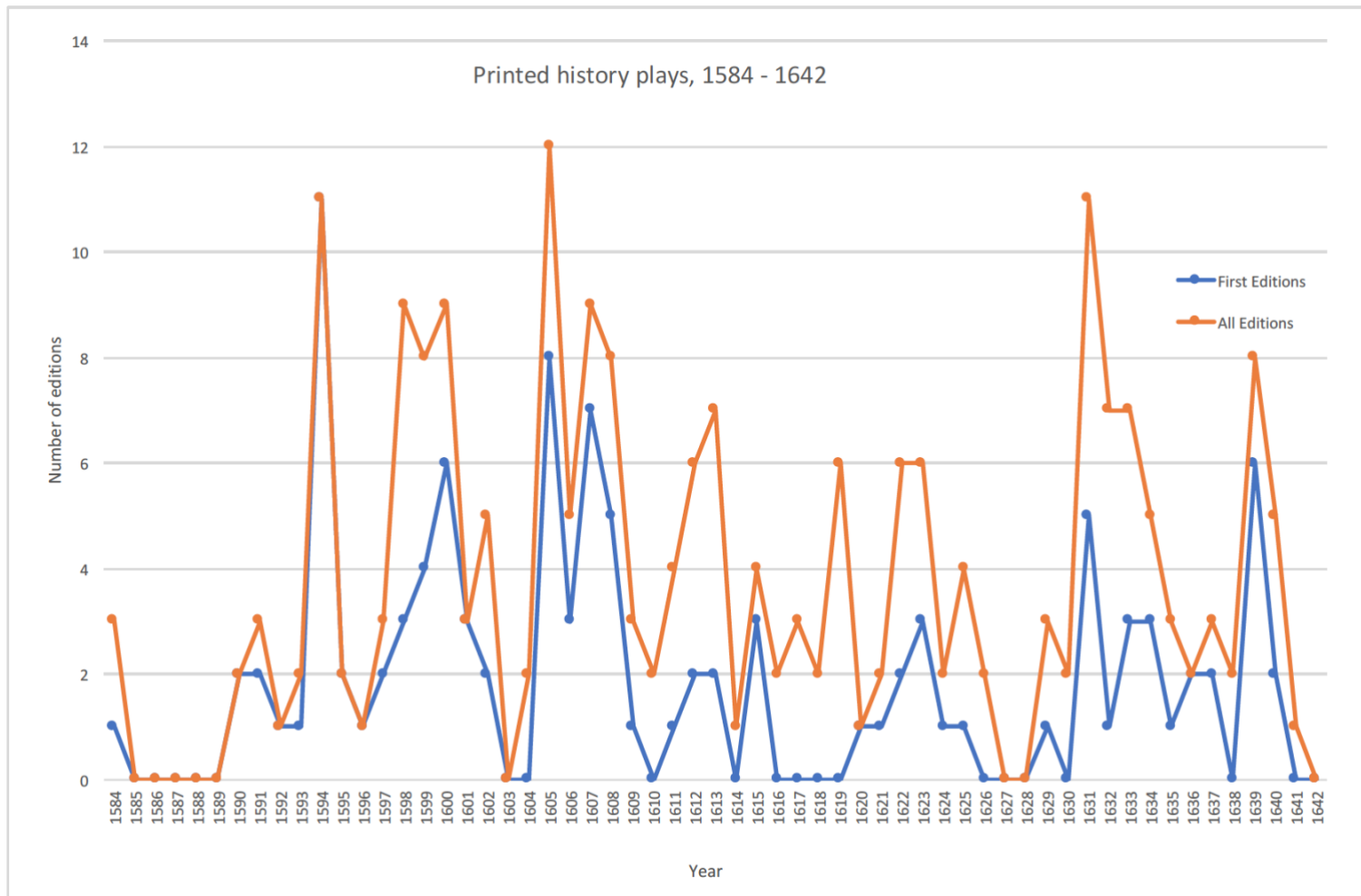
Chapter 3 has shown that a significant proportion of history plays during the early Jacobean period responded to James I's promotion of early British history and that these representations should not be neglected on the basis of their historical 'inaccuracy' (which anachronistically applies modern ideas of historiography to seventeenth-century texts). Nathaniel Butter is especially influential during this period: his interest in issues of union, twinned kingdoms, and the cause of international Protestantism (demonstrated by his non-dramatic publications) probably motivated his investment in plays such as *When You See Me You Know Me, 1* and *2 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, *King Lear*, and *The Trial of Chivalry*, and his publishing strategies gesture towards topical and political readings of these plays. By the late Jacobean period, stage and print records reveal a growing and pressing interest in the religio-political conflicts surrounding the Thirty Years' War and England's negotiations with continental adversaries and allies. Chapter 4 has drawn attention to the prominence of recent history as the material for commercial plays during this period, showing how a distinction between current events and history cannot be usefully sustained. This chapter has also highlighted the agency of the King's Men and the Herbert family in pursuing, promoting, and controlling the dramatization of current events and in the transmission of printed playbooks, taking over privileges that, previously, stationers had. Finally, Chapter 5 has shown how, in response to increasing censorship controls, the 1630s witnessed a withdrawal from the dramatizations of the recent past that were prominent at the end of the Jacobean period. Instead, performance and publication patterns favour distant and diverse histories. The period also reveals a division between first-edition and reprint publication practices. There are fewer consistent patterns of stationer involvement in first-edition history plays, which suggests a fragmentation in their agency. Editions of established history plays, such as Shakespeare's English histories, Heywood's *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, and Rowley's *When*

You See Me You Know Me, continued to be controlled by the same group of stationers, forming part of a nascent canon of history plays that is still influential.

As can be seen, this concentration on the alternative producers of history plays – theatrical companies, publishers, and patronage networks – helps to navigate the shifting position and utility of historical engagement during the early modern period, provides evidence of local readings, and brings to light important evidence for the development and transmission of historical drama. The results of this approach also have implications beyond the study of history plays: they suggest the importance of the geography of the London book trade in encouraging connections between stationers, motivating reciprocal publications, and shaping the survival of plays from the professional theatres. This study has shown how particular areas of London could become associated with different kinds of texts and authors as in, for example, the concentration of works by Shakespeare in Paul's Cross at the end of the sixteenth century. These considerations could be used to inform an examination of play survival and publication more widely. This study has also highlighted the importance of paratexts in positioning a play, encouraging a particular reading, and revealing traces of patronage relationships, an approach that could be applied to other dramatic genres and to a reconsideration of textual patronage. Critical views on early modern patronage are often limited to the evidence gleaned from dedicatory epistles and commendatory verses, whereas this study has examined more indirect indicators, including publication patterns and descriptions on playbook title pages, to consider both established and less secure patronage connections, a method that could be used to interrogate the concept of textual patronage. Finally, the approach to genre pursued by this study could be profitably extended to other dramatic genres, such as comedy and tragedy, and to later periods of history-play engagement, where the prioritization of synchronic case studies to examine patterns in participation, interpretation, and agency would broaden our perception of different genres.

Offering a selection of influential engagements and local readings of early modern history plays, this study does not purport to present a linear trajectory of generic development or suggest that the case studies discussed here are representative of the full spectrum of historical dramatizations and reception during the period. Instead, this examination destabilizes prevailing models of history play criticism and the tendency to concentrate on dramatists as the agents through which engagement and interpretation is primarily concentrated. The wide-ranging, generically hybrid nature of history and the history play eschews a singular narrative or canon of texts, benefiting from a continual process of new selection and assessment that is alert to the participation of a range of producers.

Appendix A: Printed history plays from the professional theatres, 1584-1642



This chart provides performance and publication details for history plays printed between 1584 and 1642. The plays are ordered according to publication date and there are separate entries for each new edition of a play, giving a sense of overall patterns in first and reprint publications. The included plays are not intended to offer a definitive outline of the history play as a genre, and the selection has prioritized the inclusivity suggested in the introduction. Plays from Shakespeare's first and second folios are shaded in grey to draw attention to their inclusion in a collection. Data has been sourced largely from *DEEP* and Wiggins's *Catalogue*.

Item	Play Title	Dramatist (A) = attributed in the playbook	Estimated Year of First Performance	Company (A) = attributed in the playbook	Printed Editions (BL) = black letter; (C) = part of a collection; (x/x) = edition number/total editions	Printer	Publisher/Bookseller
1	<i>Campaspe (Alexander, Campaspe and Diogenes)</i>	John Lyly	c.1583 (performed before Elizabeth on Twelfth Night)	Children of the Chapel (first), Children of Paul's (first) (A)	Q 1584 (1/5)	Thomas Dawson	Thomas Cadman
2	<i>Campaspe (Alexander, Campaspe and Diogenes)</i>	John Lyly	c.1583 (performed before Elizabeth on Twelfth Night)	Children of the Chapel (first), Children of Paul's (first) (A)	Q 1584 (2/5)	Thomas Dawson	Thomas Cadman
3	<i>Campaspe (Alexander, Campaspe and Diogenes)</i>	John Lyly	c.1583 (performed before Elizabeth on Twelfth Night)	Children of the Chapel (first), Children of Paul's (first) (A)	Q 1584 (3/5)	Thomas Dawson	Thomas Cadman
4	<i>The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London</i>	Robert Wilson, 'R.W' (A)	1588-1590	Queen Elizabeth's Men	Q 1590 (BL) (1/1)	Richard Jones	Richard Jones
5	<i>1 and 2 Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	c.1587-88	Admiral's Men (A)	O 1590 (BL) (C) (1/4)	Richard Jones	Richard Jones

6	<i>1 and 2 The Troublesome Reign of King John</i>	Anonymous	1587-91	Queen Elizabeth's Men (A)	Q 1591 (C) (1/3)	Thomas Orwin	Sampson Clarke
7	<i>Campaspe (Alexander, Campaspe and Diogenes)</i>	John Lyly	c.1583 (performed before Elizabeth on Twelfth Night)	Children of the Chapel (first), Children of Paul's (first) (A)	Q 1591 (4/5)	Thomas Orwin	William Broome
8	<i>Fair Em, the Miller's Daughter</i>	Anonymous	c.1589-91	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1591? (1/2)	John Danter	Thomas Newman (1), John Willington
9	<i>Arden of Faversham</i>	Anonymous, William Shakespeare	1588-92	[unknown]	Q 1592 (BL) (1/3)	Edward Alde	Edward White (1)
10	<i>Edward I</i>	George Peele (A)	1590-93	[unknown]	Q 1593 (1/2)	Abel Jeffes	Abel Jeffes, to be sold by William Barley
11	<i>1 and 2 Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	c.1587-88	Admiral's Men (A)	O 1593 (BL) (C) (2/4)	Robert Robinson	Richard Jones
12	<i>Jack Straw</i>	Anonymous	1590-93	[unknown]	Q 1594 (1/2)	John Danter	John Danter, to be sold by William Barley
13	<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene (A)	1587-88	Derby's (Strange's) Men	Q 1594 (BL) (1/5)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley
14	<i>2 Henry VI (The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster)</i>	William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-91	Pembroke's Men (?)	Q 1594 (1/5)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Millington

15	<i>Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay</i>	Robert Greene (A)	1586-90	Queen Elizabeth's Men (A)	Q 1594 (1/3)	Adam Islip	Edward White (1)
16	<i>The Wounds of Civil War</i>	Thomas Lodge (A)	1586-91	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1594 (1/1)	John Danter	John Danter, to be sold by Richard Bankworth(?), Anthony Kitson(?)
17	<i>The True Tragedy of Richard III</i>	Anonymous	1588-94	Queen Elizabeth's Men (A)	Q 1594 (1/1)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley
18	<i>The Battle of Alcazar</i>	George Peele	1588-89	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1594 (1/1)	Edward Alde	Richard Bankworth
19	<i>Edward II</i>	Christopher Marlowe (A)	1591-93	Pembroke's Men (A)	Q 1594 (1/4)	Robert Robinson	William Jones (2)
20	<i>I Selimus</i>	Anonymous, Robert Greene (?)	1591-94	Queen Elizabeth's Men (A)	Q 1594 (1/1)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley(?)
21	<i>The Wars of Cyrus</i>	Anonymous	1587-94	Children of the Chapel (first) (A)	Q 1594 (1/1)	Edward Alde	William Blackwell
22	<i>The Massacre at Paris</i>	Christopher Marlowe (A)	1593 (Jan 26, Jan 30)	Derby's (Strange's) Men (first performed); Admiral's Men (A)	O 1594? (1/1)	Edward Alde	Edward White (1)
23	<i>Lochrine</i>	Anonymous; 'W.S.' (A)	c. 1594	[unknown, Queen's Men?]	Q 1595 (1/1)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley(?)

24	<i>3 Henry VI (The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York)</i>	William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-92	Pembroke's Men (A)	O 1595 (1/5)	Peter Short	Thomas Millington
25	<i>The Reign of King Edward III</i>	Anonymous, William Shakespeare	1590-95	Admiral's Men	Q 1596 (1/2)	Thomas Scarlet	Cuthbert Burby
26	<i>1 and 2 Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	c.1587-88	Admiral's Men (A)	O 1597 (BL) (C) (3/4)	Richard Jones	Richard Jones
27	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare	1595	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1597 (1/8)	Valentine Simmes	Andrew Wise
28	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare	1591-93	Chamberlain's Men (A) [unknown company of first performance]	Q 1597 (1/10)	Valentine Simmes, Peter Short	Andrew Wise
29	<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene (A)	1587-91	Derby's (Strange's) Men	Q 1598 (BL) (2/5)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley
30	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1598? (1/11)	Peter Short	Andrew Wise
31	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1598 (2/11)	Peter Short	Andrew Wise
32	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1598 (2/8)	Valentine Simmes	Andrew Wise
33	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1598 (3/8)	Valentine Simmes	Andrew Wise

34	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	Chamberlain's Men (A) [unknown company of first performance]	Q 1598 (2/10)	Thomas Creede	Andrew Wise
35	<i>The Famous Victories of Henry V</i>	Anonymous	1583-88	Queen Elizabeth's Men (A)	Q 1598 (BL) (1/2)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley(?)
36	<i>Edward II</i>	Christopher Marlowe (A)	1591-93	Pembroke's Men (A)	Q 1598 (2/4)	Richard Bradock	William Jones (2)
37	<i>The Scottish History of James IV</i>	Robert Greene (A)	c. 1590	[unknown, Queen's Men?]	Q 1598 (1/1)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Creede, to be sold by William Barley(?)
38	<i>1 and 2 Edward IV</i>	Thomas Heywood	1592-99	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1599 (BL) (1/6)	John Windet	John Oxonbridge
39	<i>Arden of Faversham</i>	Anonymous, William Shakespeare	1588-92	[unknown]	Q 1599 (BL) (2/3)	James Roberts	Edward White (1)
40	<i>Edward I</i>	George Peele (A)	1590-93	[unknown]	Q 1599 (2/2)	William White	William White
41	<i>The Reign of King Edward III</i>	Anonymous, William Shakespeare	1590-95	Admiral's Men	Q 1599 (2/2)	Simon Stafford	Cuthbert Burby
42	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1599 (3/11)	Simon Stafford	Andrew Wise
43	<i>A Warning for Fair Women</i>	Anonymous	1596-1600	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1599 (BL) (1/1)	Valentine Simmes	William Aspley
44	<i>George a Green, The Pinner of Wakefield</i>	Robert Greene(?)	1587-91	Sussex's Men (A)	Q 1599 (1/1)	Simon Stafford	Cuthbert Burby

45	<i>The Love of David and Fair Bathsheba</i>	George Peele	1593-94	[unknown]	Q 1599 (1/1)	Adam Islip	Edward White (1) (?)
46	<i>2 Henry VI (The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster)</i>	William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-91	Pembroke's Men (?)	Q 1600 (2/5)	Valentine Simmes	Thomas Millington
47	<i>3 Henry VI (The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York)</i>	William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-92	Pembroke's Men (A)	Q 1600 (2/5)	William White	Thomas Millington
48	<i>Henry V</i>	William Shakespeare	1599	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1600 (1/5)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Millington and John Busby (1)
49	<i>1 and 2 Edward IV</i>	Thomas Heywood	1592-99	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1600 (BL) (C) (2/6)	Felix Kingston	John Oxonbridge and Humphrey Lownes (1)
50	<i>The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft</i>	Thomas Dekker	1599 (Jul. 15 payment)	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1600 (BL) (1/6)	Valentine Simmes	Valentine Simmes
51	<i>1 Sir John Oldcastle</i>	Robert Wilson, Michael Drayton, Anthony Munday, Richard Hathaway	1599 (Oct. 16, payment)	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1600 (1/2)	Valentine Simmes	Thomas Pavier
52	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1597-98	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1600 (1/3)	Valentine Simmes	Andrew Wise and William Aspley

53	<i>Look About You</i>	Anonymous	c. 1597-99	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1600 (1/1)	Edward Alde	William Ferbrand
54	<i>The Weakest Goeth to the Wall</i>	Anonymous	c. 1595-1600	Oxford's Men (A)	Q 1600 (1/2)	Thomas Creede	Richard Oliffe
55	<i>The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon (1 Robin Hood)</i>	Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle	1598 (Feb. 18, payment)	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1601 (BL) (1/1)	Richard Bradock	William Leake (1)
56	<i>The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon (2 Robin Hood)</i>	Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle	1598 (Feb 20 - Mar 8, payment)	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1601 (BL) (1/1)	Richard Bradock	William Leake (1)
57	<i>Two Lamentable Tragedies</i>	Robert Yarrington	1594-c.1598	Admiral's Men	Q 1601 (1/1)	Richard Read	Matthew Law
58	<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene (A)	1587-88	Derby's (Strange's) Men	Q 1602 (BL) (3/5)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Pavier
59	<i>Thomas Lord Cromwell</i>	Anonymous 'W.S.' (A)	c. 1599-1602	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1602 (1/2)	Richard Read.	William Jones (2)
60	<i>A Larum for London, or The Siege of Antwerp</i>	Anonymous	c. 1594-1600	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1602 (1/1)	Edward Alde	William Ferbrand
61	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	Chamberlain's Men (A) [unknown first company of performance]	Q 1602 (3/10)	Thomas Creede	Andrew Wise
62	<i>Henry V</i>	William Shakespeare	1598-99	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1602 (2/5)	Thomas Creede	Thomas Pavier
63	<i>Jack Straw</i>	Anonymous	1590-93	[unknown]	Q 1604 (BL) (2/2)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier

64	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1604 (4/11)	Valentine Simmes	Matthew Law
65	<i>1 Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	c.1587-88	Admiral's Men	Q 1605 (4/4) (of Part 1)	Edward Allde	Edward White (1)
66	<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene	1587-88	Derby's (Strange's) Men	Q 1605 (?) (BL) (4/5) (imperfect copy)	Ralph Blower	Thomas Pavier (?)
67	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1605 (4/10)	Thomas Creede	Matthew Law
68	<i>1 and 2 Edward IV</i>	Thomas Heywood	1592-99	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1605 (BL) (3/6)	Humphrey Lownes (1)	Nathaniel Fosbrooke
69	<i>The Trial of Chivalry (This Gallant Cavaliero Dick Bowyer)</i>	Anonymous	1599-1604	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1605 (1/1)	Simon Stafford	Nathaniel Butter
70	<i>When You See Me You Know Me (Henry the Eighth)</i>	Samuel Rowley (A)	1604	Prince Henry's Men (A)	Q 1605 (1/4)	Humphrey Lownes (1) and others	Nathaniel Butter
71	<i>The True Chronicle of King Leir</i>	Anonymous	c.1588-94	Queen's Elizabeth's Men	Q 1605 (1/1)	Simon Stafford	John Wright (1)
72	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1605 (1/8)	Thomas Purfoot (1)	Nathaniel Butter
73	<i>Sejanus His Fall</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	c.1604	King's Men	Q 1605 (1/3)	George Eld	Thomas Thorpe

74	<i>Captain Thomas Stukeley</i>	Anonymous	1596 [10 Dec, revised c.1599?]	Admiral's Men	Q 1605 (BL) (1/1)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier
75	<i>I Jeronimo, with the Wars of Portugal</i>	Anonymous	1600-05	King's Men	Q 1605 (BL) (1/1)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier
76	<i>Philotas</i>	Samuel Daniel (A)	1604 (three acts written in 1600)	Children of the Queen's Revels	O 1605 (independent and C) (1/4)	George Eld	Simon Waterson and Edward Blount
77	<i>2 Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	c.1587-88	Admiral's Men	Q 1606 (BL) (4/4) of Part 2	Edward Alde	Edward White (1)
78	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1606 (2/8)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
79	<i>2 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody (The Second Part of Queen Elizabeth's Troubles)</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-05, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1606 (1/4)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
80	<i>Nobody and Somebody</i>	Anonymous	1603-06	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1606(?) (1/1)	James Roberts	John Trundle
81	<i>The Wonder of Women, or Sophonisba</i>	John Marston (A)	1605-06	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1606 (1/2)	John Windet	William Cotton
82	<i>The Whore of Babylon</i>	Thomas Dekker (A)	c.1606-07	Prince Henry's Men (A)	Q 1607 (1/1)	Eliot's Court Press	Nathaniel Butter
83	<i>Bussy D'Ambois</i>	George Chapman	1604-05	Children of Paul's (second)	Q 1607 (1/2)	Eliot's Court Press	William Aspley
84	<i>The Travels of the Three English Brothers</i>	John Day, George Wilkins and William Rowley	1607	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1607 (1/1)	George Eld	John Wright (1)

85	<i>The Miseries of Enforced Marriage</i>	George Wilkins (A)	1605-06	King's Men (A)	Q 1607 (1/4)	William Jaggard	George Vincent (1)
86	<i>The Devil's Charter, or Pope Alexander VI</i>	Barnabe Barnes (A)	1606	King's Men (A)	Q 1607 (1/1)	George Eld	John Wright (1)
87	<i>The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt</i>	Thomas Dekker and John Webster (A)	c.1602	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1607 (1/2)	Edward Alde	Thomas Archer
88	<i>Claudius Tiberius Nero</i>	Anon.	1607	Unknown	Q 1607 (1/1)	Edward Alde	Francis Burton
89	<i>Philotas</i>	Samuel Daniel (A)	1604 (three acts written in 1600)	Children of the Queen's Revels	D 1607 (C) (2/4)	Melchisidec Bradwood	Edward Blount
90	<i>Philotas</i>	Samuel Daniel (A)	1604 (three acts written in 1600)	Children of the Queen's Revels	O 1607 (C) (3/4)	John Windet	Simon Waterson
91	<i>I If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1608 (3/8)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
92	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1606-08	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1608 (1/5)	Edward Alde	John Busby (1) and Nathaniel Butter
93	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1608 (4/8)	William White	Matthew Law
94	<i>I Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1608 (5/11)	John Windet	Matthew Law
95	<i>King Lear</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1605-06	King's Men (A)	Q 1608 (1/4)	Nicholas Okes	Nathaniel Butter

96	<i>A Yorkshire Tragedy</i>	Thomas Middleton? 'W. Shakspeare' (A)	1605-08	King's Men (A)	Q 1608 (1/2)	Richard Bradock	Thomas Pavier
97	<i>The Conspiracy of Charles Duke of Byron, and The Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron</i>	George Chapman (A)	1607-08	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1608 (C) (1/2)	George Eld	Thomas Thorpe, to be sold by Laurence Lisle
98	<i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>	Anonymous	1599-1604	Chamberlain's Men (first performance), King's Men (A)	Q 1608 (1/6)	Henry Ballard	Arthur Johnson
99	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1602-03	Chamberlain's Men (first performance), King's Men (A)	Q 1609 (1/3)	George Eld	Richard Bonian and Henry Walley
100	<i>2 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody (The Second Part of Queen Elizabeth's Troubles)</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-05, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1609 (2/4)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
101	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1606-08	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1609 (2/5)	Edward Alde	John Busby (1) and Nathaniel Butter
102	<i>The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft</i>	Thomas Dekker	1599 [Jul. 15 payment]	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1610 (BL) (2/5)	George Eld	John Wright (1)
103	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1610 (4/8)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Thomas Pavier
104	<i>Catiline His Conspiracy</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	1611	King's Men	Q 1611 (1/5)	William Stansby(?)	Walter Burre

105	<i>Philotas</i>	Samuel Daniel (A)	1604 (three acts written in 1600)	Children of the Queen's Revels	D 1611 (C) (4/4)	John Legat (1)	Simon Waterson
106	<i>1 and 2 The Troublesome Reign of King John</i>	Anonymous	1587-91	Queen Elizabeth's Men (A)	Q 1611 (C) (2/3)	Valentine Simmes	John Helme
107	<i>The Miserie of Enforced Marriage</i>	George Wilkins (A)	1605-06	King's Men (A)	Q 1611 (2/4)	William White	George Vincent (1)
108	<i>Edward II</i>	Christopher Marlowe (A)	1591-93	Pembroke's Men (A)	Q 1612 (3/4)	William Jaggard	Roger Barnes
109	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	King's Men (A) [unknown company of first performance]	Q 1612 (5/10)	Thomas Creede	Matthew Law
110	<i>A Christian Turned Turk (The Two Famous Pirates)</i>	Robert Daborne (A)	1609-12	[unknown]	Q 1612 (1/1)	Nicholas Okes	William Barrenger
111	<i>The White Devil (Vittoria Corombona)</i>	John Webster (A)	1612-13	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1612 (1/2)	Nicholas Okes	Thomas Archer
112	<i>The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt</i>	Thomas Dekker and John Webster (A)	c.1602	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1612 (2/2)	Nicholas Okes	Thomas Archer
113	<i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>	Anonymous	1599-1604 (1602)	Chamberlain's Men (first production), King's Men (A)	Q 1612 (2/5)	Thomas Creede	Arthur Johnson
114	<i>The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois</i>	George Chapman (A)	c.1610-11	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1613 (1/1)	Thomas Snodham	John Browne (1), to be sold by John Helme
115	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1613 (6/11)	William White	Matthew Law

116	<i>1 and 2 Edward IV</i>	Thomas Heywood	1592-99	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1613 (BL) (C) (4/6)	Humphrey Lownes (1)	Humphrey Lownes (1)
117	<i>Thomas Lord Cromwell</i>	Anonymous 'W.S.' (A)	c.1599-1602	Chamberlain's Men (first) King's Men (A)	Q 1613 (2/2)	Thomas Snodham	John Browne (1)
118	<i>When You See Me You Know Me (Henry the Eighth)</i>	Samuel Rowley (A)	1604	Prince Henry's Men (A)	Q 1613 (2/4)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
119	<i>I If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1613 (5/8)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
120	<i>The Insatiate Countess</i>	Lewis Machin, William Barkstead, John Marston	1607-08, revised 1609-13	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1613 (1/3)	Thomas Snodham	Thomas Archer
121	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1606-08	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1614 (3/5)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter
122	<i>The Valiant Welshman (Caradoc the Great)</i>	Anonymous 'R.A.' (A)	1610-15	Prince Charles's Men (first production), Prince Henry's Men (A)	Q 1615 (1/1)	George Purslowe	Robert Lownes
123	<i>The Hector of Germany, or The Palsgrave, Prime Elector</i>	Wentworth Smith(?), William Smith(?); 'W. Smith' (A)	c.1614-15	[unknown]	Q 1615 (1/1)	Thomas Creede	Josias Harrison
124	<i>The Four Prentices of London</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1601-07	Admiral's Men (first), Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1615 (1/2)	Nicholas Okes	John Wright
125	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men (first) King's Men (A)	Q 1615 (5/8)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Matthew Law

126	<i>Catiline His Conspiracy</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	1611	King's Men (A)	F 1616 (C) (2/5)	William Stansby	William Stansby, sold by Richard Meighen
127	<i>Sejanus His Fall</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	c.1604	King's Men (A)	F 1616 (C) (2/3)	William Stansby	William Stansby, sold by Richard Meighen
128	<i>The Insatiate Countess</i>	Lewis Machin, William Barkstead, John Marston	1607-08, revised 1609-13	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1616 (2/3)	Nicholas Okes	Thomas Archer
129	<i>The Famous Victories of Henry V</i>	Anonymous	1583-88	Queen Elizabeth's Men (first production) King's Men (A)	Q 1617 (2/2)	Bernard Alsop	Bernard Alsop
130	<i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>	Anonymous	1599-1604	Chamberlain's Men (first production), King's Men (A)	Q 1617 (3/5)	George Eld	Arthur Johnson
131	<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene (A)	1587-88	Derby's (Strange's) Men	Q 1617 (5/5)	Bernard Alsop	Bernard Alsop
132	<i>The Weakest Goeth to the Wall</i>	Anonymous	c.1595-1600	Oxford's Men (A)	Q 1618 (2/2)	George Purslowe	Richard Hawkins
133	<i>The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft</i>	Thomas Dekker	1599 [Jul. 15 payment]	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1618 (BL) (3/5)	George Eld	John Wright (1)
134	<i>2 Henry VI (The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster)</i>	William Shakespeare (A); Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-91	Pembroke's Men (?)	Q 1619 (C – The Whole Contention) (3/5)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier

135	<i>3 Henry VI (The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York)</i>	William Shakespeare (A); Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-92	Pembroke's Men	Q 1619 (C – The Whole Contention) (3/5)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier
136	<i>Henry V</i>	William Shakespeare	1598-99	Chamberlain's Men (A)	Q 1619 ['1608' imprint'] (3/5)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier
137	<i>King Lear</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1605-06	King's Men (A)	Q 1619 ['1608' imprint] (2/5)	William Jaggard	Nathaniel Butter (?), Thomas Pavier
138	<i>1 Sir John Oldcastle</i>	Robert Wilson, Michael Drayton, Anthony Munday, Richard Hathaway. A = 'William Shakespeare'	1599 (Oct 16, payment)	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1619 ['1600' imprint] (2/2)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier
139	<i>1 and 2 Edward IV</i>	Thomas Heywood	1592-99	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1619 (5/6)	Humphrey Lownes (1)	Humphrey Lownes (1)
140	<i>A Yorkshire Tragedy</i>	Thomas Middleton(?) A = 'W. Shakespeare'	1605-08	King's Men	Q 1619 (2/2)	William Jaggard	Thomas Pavier
141	<i>Swetnam the Woman Hater Arraigned by Women</i>	Anonymous	1617-19	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1620 (1/1)	William Stansby	Richard Meighen
142	<i>When You See Me You Know Me (Henry the Eighth)</i>	Samuel Rowley (A)	1604	Prince Henry's Men (A)	Q 1621 (3/4)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Nathaniel Butter

143	<i>Thierry and Theodoret</i>	Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher and Philip Massinger	1613-1621	King's Men (A)	Q 1621 (1/1)	Nicholas Okes	Thomas Walkley
144	<i>1 and 2 The Troublesome Reign of King John</i>	Anonymous; A = 'W. Shakespeare'	1587-91	Queen Elizabeth's Men	Q 1622 (1/3)	Augustine Mathewes	Thomas Dewe
145	<i>Edward II</i>	Christopher Marlowe (A)	1591-93	Pembroke's Men (A)	Q 1622 (4/4)	Eliot's Court Press	Henry Bell
146	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	King's Men (A) [unknown company of first performance]	Q 1622 (6/10)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Matthew Law
147	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1622 (7/11)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Matthew Law
148	<i>The Virgin Martyr</i>	Thomas Dekker and Philip Massinger	1620 (licensed 6 Oct., revised and re-licensed 7 July 1624)	Red Bull (Revels) Company (first) (A)	Q 1622 (1/3)	Bernard Alsop	Thomas Jones (2)
149	<i>Herod and Antipater</i>	Gervase Markham, William Sampson (A)	1619-22	Red Bull (Revels) Company (first) (A)	Q 1622 (1/1)	George Eld	Matthew Rhodes
150	<i>The Duke of Milan</i>	Philip Massinger	1621-23	King's Men (A)	Q 1623 (1/2)	Bernard Alsop	Edward Blackmore
151	<i>Philotas</i>	Samuel Daniel	1604 (three acts written in 1600)	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1623 (C) (5/5)	Nicholas Okes	Simon Waterson
152	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	John Webster	1612-14, revised 1617-23(?)	King's Men (A)	Q 1623 (1/2)	Nicholas Okes	John Waterson

153	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1623 (6/8)	George Eld	Nathaniel Butter
154	<i>2 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody (The Second Part of Queen Elizabeth's Troubles)</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-05, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1623 (3/4)	George Eld	Nathaniel Butter
155	<i>King John</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	c.1596	Chamberlain's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	Isaac Jaggard, William Jaggard	Edward Blount, John Smethwick, Isaac Jaggard, William Aspley
156	<i>1 Henry VI</i>	William Shakespeare (A), Thomas Nashe, Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	c.1590-92	Derby's (Strange's) Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
157	<i>2 Henry VI (The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster)</i>	William Shakespeare (A); Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-91	Pembroke's Men (?)	F 1623 (C) (4/5)	[as above]	[as above]
158	<i>3 Henry VI (The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York and the Good King Henry the Sixth)</i>	William Shakespeare (A); Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-92	Pembroke's Men	F 1623 (C) (4/5)	[as above]	[as above]
159	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men	F 1623 (C) (6/8)	[as above]	[as above]
160	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	[unknown company of first production]	F 1623 (C) (7/10)	[as above]	[as above]

161	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	F 1623 (C) (8/11)	[as above]	[as above]
162	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1597-98	Chamberlain's Men	F 1623 (C) (2/3)	[as above]	[as above]
163	<i>Henry V</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1599	Chamberlain's Men	F 1623 (C) (4/5)	[as above]	[as above]
164	<i>Henry VIII (All Is True)</i>	William Shakespeare (A), John Fletcher	1613	King's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
165	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1602-03	Chamberlain's Men (first performance)	F 1623 (C) (2/3)	[as above]	[as above]
166	<i>Coriolanus</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1608	King's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
167	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1598-99	Chamberlain's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
168	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1606-08	King's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
169	<i>Timon of Athens</i>	William Shakespeare (A) and Thomas Middleton	1605-08	King's Men (presumably)	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
170	<i>Macbeth</i>	William Shakespeare (A), Thomas Middleton	1606, revised c. 1616 (by Middleton)	King's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
171	<i>King Lear</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1605-06	King's Men	F 1623 (C) (3/5)	[as above]	[as above]

172	<i>Cymbeline, King of Britain</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1608-11	King's Men	F 1623 (C) (1/2)	[as above]	[as above]
173	<i>The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft</i>	Thomas Dekker	1599 [Jul. 15 payment]	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1624 (BL) (4/6)	[unknown]	John Wright (1)
174	<i>Nero (Piso's Conspiracy)</i>	Anonymous	1624	[unknown] (professional?)	Q 1624 (1/2)	Augustine Mathewes and John Norton (2)	Thomas Jones (2)
175	<i>A Game at Chess</i>	Thomas Middleton	1624 [licensed Jun 12]	King's Men	Q [1625] (1/3)	Nicholas Okes	[unknown]
176	<i>A Game at Chess</i>	Thomas Middleton	1624 [licensed Jun 12]	King's Men	Q [1625] (2/3)	Nicholas Okes	[unknown]
177	<i>A Game at Chess</i>	Thomas Middleton	1624 [licensed Jun 12]	King's Men	Q [1625] (3/3)	'Jan Masse' (pseud.), Edward Alde, Augustine Mathewes	[unknown]
178	<i>The Conspiracy of Charles Duke of Byron, and The Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron</i>	George Chapman (A)	1607-08	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1625 (C) (2/2)	Nicholas Okes	Thomas Thorpe
179	<i>1 and 2 Edward IV</i>	Thomas Heywood	1592-99	Derby's (Strange's) Men	Q 1626 (6/6)	Humphrey Lownes (1)	Humphrey Lownes (1)
180	<i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>	Anonymous	1599-1604	Chamberlain's Men (first production), King's Men (A)	Q 1626 (4/5)	Augustine Mathewes	Francis Faulkner

181	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	King's Men (A) [unknown company of first production]	Q 1629 (8/10)	John Norton (2)	Matthew Law
182	<i>The Miserie of Enforced Marriage</i>	George Wilkins (A)	1605-06	King's Men (A)	Q 1629 (3/4)	Augustine Mathewes	Richard Thrale and George Vincent (2)
183	<i>The Roman Actor</i>	Philip Massinger (A)	1626 (licensed Oct 11)	King's Men (A)	Q 1629 (1/1)	Bernard Alsop and Thomas Fawcet	Robert Allott
184	<i>Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay</i>	Robert Greene (A)	1586-90	Queen Elizabeth's Men (first production,) Prince Palatine's Men (A)	Q 1630 (2/2)	Elizabeth Alde	Elizabeth Alde
185	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1606-08	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1630 (4/5)	William Stansby	Nathaniel Butter
186	<i>Caesar and Pompey</i> (<i>The Wars of Caesar and Pompey</i>)	George Chapman (A)	c.1602-05, Act 2 Scene 1 written c.1610-11?	[unknown]	Q 1631 (1/1)	Thomas Harper	Thomas Harper, to be sold by Godfrey Emerson and Thomas Alchorn
187	<i>The Duchess of Suffolk</i>	Thomas Drue	1624 [licensed Jan 2]	Prince Palatine's Men	Q 1631 (1/1)	Augustine Mathewes	Jasper Emery
188	<i>The Insatiate Countess</i>	Lewis Machin, William Barkstead, John Marston (A = 'Iohn Marston')	1607-08	Children of the Queen's Revels	Q 1631 (3/3)	John Norton (2)	Hugh Perry
189	<i>Fair Em, the Miller's Daughter</i>	Anonymous	c.1589-91	Derby's (Strange's) Men (A)	Q 1631 (2/2)	John Haviland	John Wright (1)

190	<i>The White Devil</i> (<i>Vittoria Corombona</i>)	John Webster (A)	1612-13	Queen Anne's Men (first production) Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1631 (2/2)	John Norton (2)	Hugh Perry
191	<i>The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft</i>	Thomas Dekker	1599 [Jul. 15 payment]	Admiral's Men (A)	Q 1631 (BL) (5/6)	Eliot's Court Press	John Wright (1)
192	<i>1 The Fair Maid of the West, or A Girl Worth Gold</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1597-1604	Queen Anne's Men (first production), Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1631 (1/1)	Miles Flesher	Richard Royston
193	<i>2 The Fair Maid of the West, or A Girl Worth Gold</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1630-31	Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1631 (1/1)	Miles Flesher	Richard Royston
194	<i>The Virgin Martyr</i>	Thomas Dekker and Philip Massinger (A)	1620 (licensed Oct 6, revised and re-licensed July 7 1624)	Red Bull (Revels) Company (first) (A)	Q 1631 (2/2)	Bernard Alsop and Thomas Fawcet	Thomas Jones (2)
195	<i>Hoffman, or A Revenge for a Father</i>	Henry Chettle	1602	Admiral's Men	Q 1631 (1/1)	John Norton (2)	Hugh Perry
196	<i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>	Anonymous	1599-1604	Chamberlain's Men (first production), King's Men (A)	Q 1631 (5/5)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Francis Faulkner
197	<i>The Emperor of the East</i>	Philip Massinger (A)	1631 [licensed March 11]	King's Men (A)	Q 1632 (1/1)	Thomas Harper	John Waterson
198	<i>The Four Prentices of London</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1601-07	Admiral's Men (first), Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1632 (2/2)	Nicholas Okes	John Okes(?)
199	<i>When You See Me You Know Me (Henry the Eighth)</i>	Samuel Rowley (A)	1604	Prince Henry's Men (A)	Q 1632 (4/4)	Bernard Alsop and Thomas Fawcet	Nathaniel Butter

200	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1632 (7/8)	Bernard Alsop and Thomas Fawcet	Nathaniel Butter
201	<i>Campaspe (Alexander, Campaspe and Diogenes)</i>	John Lyly	c.1583 (performed before Elizabeth on Twelfth Night)	Children of the Chapel (first), Children of Paul's (first) (A)	D 1632 (C) (5/5)	William Stansby	Edward Blount
202	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1632 (9/11)	John Norton (2)	William Sheares (1)
203	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	F 1632 (C) (10/11)	Thomas Cotes	Robert Allott
204	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1597-98	Chamberlain's Men	F 1632 (3/3)	[as above]	[as above]
205	<i>2 Henry VI (The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster)</i>	William Shakespeare (A), Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-91	Pembroke's Men (?)	F 1632 (C) (5/5)	[as above]	[as above]
206	<i>3 Henry VI (The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York)</i>	William Shakespeare (A), Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	1590-92	Pembroke's Men	F 1632 (C) (5/5)	[as above]	[as above]

207	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men	F 1632 (C) (7/8)	[as above]	[as above]
208	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	[unknown company of first production]	F 1632 (C) (9/10)	[as above]	[as above]
209	<i>Henry V</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1599	Chamberlain's Men	F 1632 (C) (5/5)	[as above]	[as above]
210	<i>King John</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	c.1596	Chamberlain's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
211	<i>1 Henry VI</i>	William Shakespeare (A), Thomas Nashe, Christopher Marlowe, Anonymous	c.1590-92	Derby's (Strange's) Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
212	<i>Henry VIII (All Is True)</i>	William Shakespeare (A), John Fletcher	1613	King's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
213	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1602-03	Chamberlain's Men (first performance)	F 1632 (C) (3/3)	[as above]	[as above]
214	<i>Coriolanus</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1608	King's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
215	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1598-99	Chamberlain's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
216	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1606-08	King's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]

217	<i>Timon of Athens</i>	William Shakespeare (A) and Thomas Middleton	1605-08	King's Men (presumably)	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
218	<i>Macbeth</i>	William Shakespeare (A), Thomas Middleton	1606, revised c.1616 (by Middleton)	King's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
219	<i>King Lear</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1605-06	King's Men	F 1632 (C) (4/5)	[as above]	[as above]
220	<i>Cymbeline, King of Britain</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1608-11	King's Men	F 1632 (C) (2/2)	[as above]	[as above]
221	<i>The Costly Whore</i>	Anonymous	c.1619-32	Red Bull Company (Revel's) (first) (A)	Q 1633 (1/1)	Augustine Mathewes	Hugh Perry and William Sheares (1)
222	<i>Arden of Faversham</i>	Anonymous, William Shakespeare	1588-92	[unknown]	Q 1633 (3/3)	Elizabeth Allde	Elizabeth Allde
223	<i>The Wonder of Women, or Sophonisba</i>	John Marston (A)	1605-06	Children of the Queen's Revels	O 1633 (2/2)	[unknown]	William Sheares (1)
224	<i>2 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody (The Second Part of Queen Elizabeth's Troubles)</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-05, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1633 (4/4)	[unknown]	Nathaniel Butter
225	<i>Nero (Piso's Conspiracy)</i>	Anonymous	1624	[unknown] (professional?)	Q 1633 (2/2)	Augustine Mathewes	Thomas Jones (2)
226	<i>The Jew of Malta</i>	Christopher Marlowe (A)	1589-90	Strange's Men, Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1633 (1/1)	John Beale	Nicholas Vavasour
227	<i>The Broken Heart</i>	John Ford	1630-33	King's Men (A)	Q 1633 (1/1)	John Beale	Hugh Beeston

228	<i>The Noble Spanish Soldier (The Noble Solder, or A Contract Broken Justly Revenged)</i>	Thomas Dekker; A = 'S.R.'	1622	[unknown]	Q 1634 (1/1)	John Beale	Nicholas Vavasour
229	<i>Perkin Warbeck</i>	John Ford (A)	c.1625-34	Queen Henrietta's Men (A)	Q 1634 (1/1)	Thomas Purfoot (2)	Hugh Beeston
230	<i>The Late Lancashire Witches</i>	Thomas Heywood, Richard Brome (A)	1634	King's Men (A)	Q 1634 (1/1)	Thomas Harper	Benjamin Fisher
231	<i>Richard II</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1595	Chamberlain's Men (first production) King's Men (A)	Q 1634 (8/8)	John Norton (2)	John Norton (2)
232	<i>Richard III</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1591-93	King's Men (A), [unknown company of first production]	Q 1634 (10/10)	John Norton (2)	John Norton (2)
233	<i>Catiline His Conspiracy</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	1611	King's Men (A)	Q 1635 (3/5)	Nicholas Okes	John Spencer
234	<i>Catiline His Conspiracy</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	1611	King's Men (A)	Q 1635 (4/5)	Nicholas Okes	John Spencer
235	<i>The Traitor</i>	James Shirley (A)	1631 (May 4 licensed for stage)	Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1635 (1/1)	John Norton (2)	William Cooke
236	<i>The Vow Breaker, or The Fair Maid of Clifton</i>	William Sampson (A)	c.1625-36	[unknown] (nonprofessional?)	Q 1636 (1/1)	John Norton (2)	Roger Ball (bookseller)
237	<i>The Great Duke of Florence</i>	Philip Massinger (A)	1627 (licensed July 5)	Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1636 (1/1)	Miles Flesher	John Marriot
238	<i>The Valiant Scot</i>	'J.W.' (A)	1625-26	[unknown]	Q 1637 (1/1)	Thomas Harper	John Waterson

239	<i>Hannibal and Scipio</i>	Thomas Nabbes (A)	1635	Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1637 (also appears in collection in 1639) (1/1)	Richard Oulton	Charles Greene
240	<i>The Miserie of Enforced Marriage</i>	George Wilkins (A)	1605-06	King's Men (A)	Q 1637 (4/4)	John Norton (2)	Richard Thrale
241	<i>The Duke of Milan</i>	Philip Massinger (A)	1621-23	King's Men (A)	Q 1638 (2/2)	John Raworth	Edward Blackmore
242	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	Thomas Heywood (A)	1606-08	Queen Anne's Men (A)	Q 1638 (5/5)	John Raworth	Nathaniel Butter
243	<i>Chabot, Admiral of France</i>	George Chapman, James Shirley (A)	1611-13, revised by Shirley and licensed Apr 29 1635	Lady Elizabeth's Men (first production), Queen Henrietta Maria's Men (A)	Q 1639 (1/1)	Thomas Cotes	William Cooke, Andrew Crooke (1)
244	<i>Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt</i>	Thomas May (A)	1626	[unknown] (nonprofessional?)	D 1639 (1/1)	Thomas Harper	Thomas Walkley
245	<i>Julia Agrippina, Empress of Rome</i>	Thomas May (A)	1628	[unknown] (nonprofessional?)	D 1639 (1/1)	Richard Hodgkinson	Thomas Walkley
246	<i>Albertus Wallenstein</i>	Henry Glapthorne (A)	1634-39, licensed 1639	King's Men (A)	Q 1639 (1/1)	Thomas Paine	George Hutton
247	<i>The Bloody Brother (Rollo, Duke of Normandy)</i>	John Fletcher (A = 'J.F. '), Philip Massinger, George Chapman(?) Nathan Field(?) Ben Jonson(?)	1617, revised 1627-30	King's Men	Q 1639 (1/2)	Richard Bishop	Thomas Allott, John Crooke (1)
248	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	William Shakespeare (A)	1596-97	Chamberlain's Men	Q 1639 (11/11)	John Norton (2)	Hugh Perry

249	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Thomas Heywood	1604-5, revised c.1632	Queen Anne's Men	Q 1639 (8/8)	John Raworth	Nathaniel Butter
250	<i>1 and 2 Arviragus and Philicia</i>	Lodowick Carlell	1635-36	King's Men (A)	D 1639	John Norton (2)	Richard Sergier (2), John Crooke (1)
251	<i>Messalina, the Roman Empress</i>	Nathaniel Richards (A)	1634-36	King's Revels Company (A)	O 1640 (1/1)	Thomas Cotes	Daniel Frere
252	<i>The Bloody Brother (Rollo, Duke of Normandy)</i>	John Fletcher (A), Philip Massinger, George Chapman(?), Nathan Field(?), Ben Jonson(?)	1617, revised 1627- 30	King's Men (A)	Q 1640 (2/2)	Leonard Lichfield	Richard Sergier (2), John Crooke (1) (?)
253	<i>Albumazar</i>	Thomas Tomkis	1615 (March 9 licensed)	n/a – University	Q 1640? (1634) (4/4)	Nicholas Okes	John Okes(?)
254	<i>Catiline His Conspiracy</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	1611	King's Men (A)	F 1640 (C) (5/5)	Richard Bishop, Robert Young	Andrew Crooke (1) (bookseller)
255	<i>Sejanus His Fall</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	c.1604	King's Men (A)	F 1640 (C) (3/3)	Richard Bishop and Robert Young.	Andrew Crooke (1) (bookseller)
256	<i>Mortimer His Fall</i>	Ben Jonson (A)	1595-1637 (1637)	[unacted?]	F 1640-1 (C) (1/1)	Thomas Harper, John Dawson (2), Bernard Alsop, Thomas Fawcet, John Beale.	Richard Meighen, Thomas Walkley
257	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	John Webster (A)	1612-14, revised 1617-23(?)	King's Men (A)	Q 1640 (2/2)	John Raworth	John Benson
258	<i>Bussy D'Ambois</i>	George Chapman (A)	1604-05	Children of Paul's (second)	Q 1641 (2/2)	Alice Norton	Robert Lunne

Appendix B: Printed plays and Stationers' Register entries in 1594

This chart provides details of all the plays first published and/or entered in the Stationers' Register in 1594, specifying title-page attributions to dramatists and companies. Square brackets indicate that the associated company or dramatist was not advertised on the title-page. Lost plays are given in quotation marks.

Title	Author	Company	Stationers' Register	Printer/Publisher/Bookseller
<i>The True Tragedy of Richard III</i>	[Anon]	Queen's Men	19 June 1594 to Thomas Creede	Printed/published by Creede, sold by William Barley in 1594
<i>Selimus</i>	[Greene?/Anon]	Queen's Men	No entry	Printed/published by Creede in 1594
<i>The Famous Victories of Henry V</i>	[Anon]	Queen's Men	14 May 1594 to Thomas Creede	Printed/published by Creede in 1598
<i>The Scottish History of James IV</i>	'Robert Greene, Maister of Arts'	[?/Queen's Men]	14 May 1594 to Thomas Creede	Printed/published by Creede in 1598
<i>Locrine</i>	'W.S.' [unknown]	[?/Queen's Men]	20 July 1594 to Thomas Creede	Printed/published by Creede in 1595
<i>The Pedlar's Prophecy</i>	[Anon]	[unknown]	13(?) May 1594 to Thomas Creede	Printed/published by Creede/Barley in 1595
<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	'Thomas Lodge Gentleman, and Robert Greene. In Artibus Magister'	[Strange's Men]	5 March 1594 to Thomas Creede	Printed/published by Creede, sold by Barley in 1594
<i>King Leir</i>	[Anon]	[Queen's Men]	14 May 1594 to Edward White, replacing Islip	Printed by Simon Stafford, published and sold by John Wright (1) in 1605
<i>Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay</i>	'Robert Greene Maister of Arts'	Queen's Men	14 May 1594 to Edward White	Printed by Islip, published and sold by White in 1594

<i>The Wounds of Civil War</i>	‘Thomas Lodge Gent.’	Admiral’s Men	24 May 1594 to John Danter	Printed/published by Danter, sold by Bankworth(?) and Kitson(?) in 1594
<i>The Massacre at Paris</i>	‘Christopher Marlow’	Admiral’s Men	No entry	Printed by Alde, published by Edward White in 1594(?)
<i>Edward II</i>	‘Chri. Marlow Gent.’	Pembroke’s Men	6 July 1593 to William Jones (2)	Printed by Robinson, published and sold by William Jones in 1594
<i>Dido, Queen of Carthage</i>	‘Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nash. Gent.’	Children of the Chapel	9 February 1596 (after first edition)	Printed by Joan Orwin, published and sold by Thomas Woodcock in 1594
<i>The Cobbler’s Prophecy</i>	‘Robert Wilson. Gent.’	[unknown]	8 June 1594 to Cuthbert Burby	Printed by Danter, published and sold by Burby in 1594
<i>The Love of David and Fair Bathsheba</i>	‘George Peele’	[unknown]	14 May 1594 to Edward White, replacing Islip	Printed by Islip in 1599
‘John of Gaunt’	[Anon]	[unknown]	14 May 1594 to Edward White, replacing Islip	LOST
‘Robin Hood and Little John’	[Anon]	[unknown]	14 May 1594 to Edward White, replacing Islip	LOST
<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	[Shakespeare and Peele]	Derby’s, Pembroke’s and Sussex’s Men	6 February 1594 to John Danter	Printed/published by Danter, sold by Thomas Millington and Edward White in 1594
<i>The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster</i>	[Shakespeare/Marlowe/Anon]	[Pembroke’s Men (?)]	12 March 1594 to Thomas Millington	Printed by Creede for Millington in 1594
<i>The Battle of Alcazar</i>	[Peele]	Admiral’s Men	No entry	Printed by Alde, published and sold by Bankworth in 1594

<i>A Knack to Know a Knave</i>	[Anon]	‘Ed. Allen and his Companie’ [Strange’s Men]	7 January 1594 to Richard Jones	Published by Jones in 1594
<i>The Taming of a Shrew</i>	[Anon/Shakespeare?]	Pembroke’s Men	2 May 1594 to Peter Short	Printed by Short, sold by Burby in 1594
<i>Mother Bombie</i>	[Lyly]	Children of Paul’s	18 June 1594 to Cuthbert Burby	Printed by Scarlet, published by Burby in 1594
<i>The Wars of Cyrus</i>	[Anon]	Children of the Chapel	No entry	Printed by Alde, published and sold by William Blackwall in 1594
<i>Orlando Furioso</i>	[Greene]	[unknown]	7 December 1593 to John Danter	Printed by Danter, published and sold by Burby in 1594
<i>Jack Straw</i>	[Anon]	[unknown]	23 October 1593 to John Danter	Printed/published by Danter, sold by William Barley in 1594 (colophon)
‘Heliogabalus’	[Anon]	[unknown]	19 June 1594 to John Danter	LOST
<i>The Jew of Malta</i>	‘Christopher Marlo’	Queen Henrietta Maria’s Men	17 May 1594 to Nicholas Ling and Thomas Millington	Printed by John Beale, published and sold by Nicholas Vavasour in 1633
<i>The Four Prentices of London</i>	‘Thomas Heywood’	Queen Anne’s Men	19 June 1594 to John Danter	Printed by Nicholas Okes for John Wright in 1615

Appendix C: Alternative histories from 1596 to 1602

These tables provide details of lost and extant plays performed and/or published between 1596 and 1602, arranged into several historical clusters: early medieval history, early British history, classical history, biblical history, and recent history. These plays and their categorizations are not intended to be comprehensive or definitive; the tables are provided to illustrate the variety of historical dramatizations witnessed on stage at the end of the sixteenth century, which contrasts significantly with the prioritization of late-medieval monarchical history in print. Most of the plays presented here are now lost (indicated by titles given in quotation marks), and each entry provides an indication of the play's likely subject matter, along with references to further records (usually Henslowe's *Diary*, abbreviated as *HD*). Aside from the *Diary*, data for these tables has been sourced from the *Lost Plays Database*, *DEEP*, and Wiggins's *Catalogue*.

Early medieval English history

Title	Dramatist(s)/Company	Date	Source	Historical material/subject
'The Life and Death of Henry I'	Anon. Admiral's Men	May 1597 (first performance)	<i>HD</i> : F.26v-27r.	Featuring Henry I, who ruled from 1100-1135. His reign was marked by succession crises and military conflict in France.
'Hardicanute'	Anon. Admiral's and Pembroke's Men	Oct. 1597 (performed)	<i>HD</i> : F.27v.	King Hardicanute, who reigned in England between 1040 and 1042. Possibly focusing on the succession crisis following the death of King Canute, when dissenting barons supported an illegitimate son, Harold Harefoot, above the legitimate heir, Hardicanute.
'The Famous Wars of Henry I and the Prince of Wales' [possibly connected to 'Welchmans price']	Drayton, Chettle, Dekker Admiral's Men	March 1598 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.45r	Depicting Henry I, who was the youngest son of William the Conqueror and reigned from 1110-1135. Possibly involving the drowning of Henry's heirs and his own death, which left England without a successor.
'Earl Godwin and His Three Sons', parts 1 and 2	Chettle, Dekker, Drayton, Wilson Admiral's Men	March 1598 (1); April 1598 (2) (first references)	<i>HD</i> : F.45r-47r	Probably featuring the competing claims and uprisings following the accession of Hardicanute as king of England in the eleventh century. Earl Godwin was involved in these conflicts, putting forward his own family for succession.

‘The Funeral of Richard Coeur de Lion’	Chettle, Drayton, Munday, and Wilson Admiral’s Men	June 1598 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.46rv	Featuring the death and funeral of Richard I in 1199.
‘William Longsword’ (‘William Longbeard’)	Drayton Admiral’s Men	Jan. 1599 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.31r, F.52v	Likely dramatizing events from the life of William Longespée, third earl of Salisbury (1167-1226), who was the son of Henry II, and involved in military successes against the French.
<i>Look About You</i>	Anon. Admiral’s Men	Q1 1600	Printed Q	Featuring Robert Hood, Earl of Huntington, and King Henry II, set during the twelfth century and loosely dramatizing events which took place in 1173-74.
‘The Humorous Earl of Gloucester, with his Conquest of Portugal’	Anthony Wadeson Admiral’s Men	June 1601 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.85r, 87v, 91v.	Featuring events supposed to have taken place during the reign of King Stephen of England (1135-54)
<i>The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington</i>	Munday, Chettle Admiral’s Men	Q1 1601 (first performed 1598)	Printed Q	Dramatizing events from the life of Robin Hood (as Robert, Earl of Huntington) during the reign of Richard I in the twelfth century.
<i>The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington</i>	Munday, Chettle Admiral’s Men	Q1 1601 (first performed 1598)	Printed Q	Dramatizing events from life of Robin Hood (as Robert, Earl of Huntington) during the reign of Richard I and King John in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Early British history

Title	Dramatist(s)/Company	Date	Source	Historical material/subject
'Chinon of England'	Anon. Admiral's Men	Jan. 1596 (first performed), 14 performances in 1596	HD: F.14r-15v, F.21v, F.25r	Likely a 'heroical romance' (Harbage), depicting legendary figures from the reign of King Arthur. Cf. Christopher Middleton's <i>The famous historie of Chinon of England</i> (1597).
'Vortigern'	Anon. Admiral's Men	Dec. 1596 (first performed)	HD: F.25v, F.26r, F.22v, F.95r	Vortigern, king in Britain during the fifth century. Most sources present his reign as tyrannical.
'Uther Pendragon'	Anon. Admiral's Men	April 1597 (first performance)	HD: F.26v-27r	Featuring events from the history of Uther Pendragon, king of Britain and father of King Arthur, in the sixth century.
'The Conquest of Brute', parts 1 and 2	Day, Chettle Admiral's Men	July 1598 (first reference)	HD: F.49r-52v	Probably featuring events from the life of Brutus, the legendary founder of Britain and a descendant of Aeneas, from the twelfth century BC.
'Arthur King of England'	Richard Hathaway Admiral's Men	April 1598 (first reference, playbook purchase)	HD: F.45v-46r	Featuring events from the history of King Arthur from the fifth to sixth centuries.
'Mulmutius Dunwallow'	William Rankins Admiral's Men	October 1598 (first reference)	HD: F.50r	Featuring events from the life and reign of Mulmutius Dunwallow in the fifth century BC, possibly concentrating the unification of Britain.
'Brute Greenshield'	Anon. Admiral's Men	March 1599 (presumably performed) - licensed by Tilney in March	HD: F.54r	Dramatizing events from the reign of King Brutus II, who supposedly ruled during the ninth century BC.

'Tristram de Lyonesse'	Anon. Admiral's Men	Oct. 1599 (first reference, playbook purchased)	<i>HD</i> : F.64v.	Probably featuring events during the time of King Arthur in the fifth to sixth centuries, involving Tristram, Isolde and King Mark of Cornwall.
'Ferrex and Porrex'	Haughton Admiral's Men	March 1600 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.68r-69r	Featuring the reigns of Ferrex and Porrex, who deposed their father and divided Britain between themselves, in the fifth century BC.

Classical history

Title	Dramatist(s)/Company	Date	Source	Historical material/subject
'Julian the Apostate'	Anon. Admiral's Men	April 1596 (first performed)	<i>HD</i> : F.15v	Julian the Apostate (Flavius Claudius Julianus) was Roman Emperor from 361 to 363 (and the last non-Christian ruler).
'Phocas' ('Focas')	Anon. Admiral's Men	May 1596 (first performed)	<i>HD</i> : F.15v, F.21v, F.45v	Phocas was a centurion, who was elected Emperor of Constantinople in 606, and deposed by Heraclius in 610.
'Pythagoras'	Anon. Admiral's Men	Jan. 1596 (first performed)	<i>HD</i> : F.14r-15v, F.21v, F.45v	Possibly related to the Ancient Greek philosopher, Pythagoras.
'Catiline's Conspiracy' ('Catiline')	Wilson, Chettle Admiral's Men	August 1598 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.49v	Lucius Sergius Catiline (108-62 BC) was a Roman senator, largely presented as an ambitious and tyrannical patrician in historical sources.
<i>The Blind Beggar of Alexandria</i>	Chapman Admiral's Men	Q1 1598, performed Feb. 1596	Printed Q	Set during the reign of King Ptolemy I of Egypt (323-283 BC).
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Shakespeare Chamberlain's Men	1599 (first performed)	Printed in F 1623	Dramatizing the assassination of Julius Caesar.
'Jugurtha, King of Numidia'	William Boyle Admiral's Men	Feb. 1600 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.67v	Possibly featuring the life of Jugurtha, King of Numidia, in North Africa (c. 160-104BC), who was executed in Rome in 104 BC.
'Hannibal and Scipio'	Hathaway, Rankins Admiral's Men	Jan. 1601 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.31v, 71r	Likely featuring events during the second Punic War (218-201 BC).
'Caesar's Fall'	Munday, Drayton, Webster, Middleton Admiral's Men	May 1602 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.105v	Possibly dramatizing events from the life of Julius Caesar.

Biblical history

Title	Dramatist(s)	Date	Source	Historical material/subject
'Nebuchadnezzar'	Anon. Admiral's Men	Dec. 1596 (first performance)	<i>HD</i> : F.25v-26r	Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon from c.605-562BC. He attempted to expand his empire and features in the Book of Daniel (1-4).
<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Lodge, Greene Strange's Men	Q2 1598 (first published in 1594)	Printed Q	Dramatizes events during the reign of Jeroboam II (786-746 BC).
<i>The Love of David and Fair Bathsheba</i>	Peele Unknown company, possible Queen's Men	Q1 1599 (first performed c.1590)	Printed Q	Dramatizes events from the reign of King David (1055-1015 BC), featuring in 2 Samuel 11-19, 23.
'Judas'	Haughton, Bird, S. Rowley Admiral's Men	May 1600 (payment to Haughton), Dec. 1601 (payment to Rowley and Bird), performed Jan. 1602	<i>HD</i> : F.69v, F.95r-v	Presumably dramatizing the biblical history surrounding Judas Iscariot in the first century AD.
'Pontius Pilate'	Anon. Dekker contributed a prologue and epilogue. Admiral's Men	Jan. 1602 (payment to Dekker)	<i>HD</i> : F.96r	Featuring events from the life of Pontius Pilate in the first century AD, possibly involving his governorship of Judea.
'Absalom'	Anon. Worcester's Men	Oct. 1602 (performed)	<i>HD</i> : F.116v	Dramatizing biblical history involving King David and his son, Absalom, from the eleventh century BC, featured in 2 Samuel 13-18.
'Samson'	Edward Juby, S. Rowley Admiral's Men	July 1602 (first reference), performed Sep. 1602	<i>HD</i> : F.107r	Depicting events from the life of Samson, found in the Book of Judges 14-16, 19-21.

‘Jephthah’	Dekker, Munday Admiral’s Men	May 1602 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.105v- 106v	Biblical history, featuring in Judges 11-12.
‘Tobias’	Chettle Admiral’s Men	May 1602 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.105v- 106v.	Biblical history from seventh century BC, featuring in the Book of Tobit.
‘Joshua’	S. Rowley Admiral’s Men	Sep. 1602 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.108r.	Likely dramatizing material from the Book of Joshua.
<i>A Looking Glass for London and England</i>	Lodge, Greene	Q3 1602 (first published in 1594)	Printed Q	Dramatizes events during the reign of Jeroboam II (786-746 BC).

Recent histories
(classified here as involving events from the Elizabethan period)

Title	Dramatist(s)	Date	Source	Historical material/subject
<i>Captain Thomas Stukeley</i>	Anon. Admiral's Men	Dec. 1596 (first performed)	<i>HD</i> : F.25v-27r. Printed in 1605	Dramatizing events which took place between 1552 and 1578, including the Battle of Three Kings.
'The Civil Wars of France', parts 1, 2, 3	Dekker, Drayton Admiral's Men	Oct. 1598 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.50v-52v	Religious conflicts and civil wars in France initiated by the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572, possibly featuring events as late as the Edict of Nantes in April 1598
'The First Introduction of the Civil Wars of France'	Dekker Admiral's Men	Jan. 1599 (payment to Dekker)	<i>HD</i> : F.52v	Probably featuring events in France during the 1560s, before the St Bartholomew's Day massacre.
'The Overthrow of Turnholt'	Anon. Unknown company	October 1599 (performance)	Letter from Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney, dated 26 and 27 Oct. 1599 (Wiggins IV, p.143, 1203)	Probably dramatizing the victory of Maurice of Nassau (with support from English troops) at Turnhout on 24 January 1597.
'Thomas Merry' ('Beech's Tragedy')	Day, Haughton Admiral's Men	Nov. 1599 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.29r, F.65v-67r	Dramatizes the murder of Thomas Merry, which took place on 23 August 1594. [See also the entry for <i>Two Lamentable Tragedies</i>]
'Page of Plymouth'	Jonson, Dekker Admiral's Men	August 1599 (first reference)	<i>HD</i> : F.63v-64r	Dramatizing the murder of Master Page of Plymouth on 11 February 1591, by the consent of his wife and her lover, George Strangwidge.
<i>A Warning for Fair Women</i>	Anon. Chamberlain's Men	Performed 1596-99, Q1 1599	Printed Q	Dramatizes the murder of George Sanders in 1573.

'Sebastian King of Portugal'	Dekker, Chettle Admiral's Men	April 1601 (first reference)	HD: F.86v-87r.	Dramatizing events from the life and legend surrounding King Sebastian of Portugal, who was killed at the Battle of Three Kings. Reports of his alleged escape circulated for decades.
<i>Two Lamentable Tragedies</i>	Yarington Admiral's Men	1601 (publication)	Printed Q	The first tragedy presents 'the murther of Maister Beech a Chaundler in Thames-streete, and his boys, done by Thomas Merry', which occurred in 1594.
'Berowne' ('Biron')	Anon. Worcester's Men	Sep. 1602 (first reference)	HD: F.116r-v.	Featuring events which took place in 1602 in France, involving the Duke of Biron and his execution. Cf. <i>A True and Perfect Discourse of the Practices and Treasons of Marshal Biron</i> (1602).
'Philip of Spain'	Anon. Admiral's Men	Aug. 1602 (purchase of playbook from Edward Alleyn)	HD: F.107r.	Presumably featuring events from the life and reign of King Philip II of Spain, who reigned from 1556-1598.
'The Capture of Stuhl-Weissenburg' ('Alba Regalis')	Heywood and Wentworth Smith Worcester's Men	Sep. 1602 (first reference)	HD: F.115v-116r.	Depicting the besieging of Alba Regalis, which took place in 1601.
'Cutting Dick'	Heywood (additions) Worcester's Men	Sep. 1602 (additions)	HD: F.116r	Featuring events from the life of a highwayman, known as Cutting Dick Evans, who was executed in 1601.
<i>A Larum for London, or The Siege of Antwerp</i>	Anon. Chamberlain's Men	Q1 1602	Printed Q	Dramatizes events based on the siege of Antwerp in 1575-76.

**Appendix D: The publication of plays from adult and children's companies,
1605 – 1608**

This chart compares the plays published from the three royally-patronized adult companies, and the boys' companies between 1605 and 1608, demonstrating a sharp division in their subject matter, as suggested through the publication patterns. Plays in bold engage with historical subjects. Company title-page attributions are given in the right columns. Square brackets indicate that the company connection is not advertised on the title page.

CQR = Children of the Queen's Revels, CP = Children of Paul's (second), CC = Children of the Chapel (second), CKR = Children of the King's Revels, KM=King's Men, QA = Queen Anne's Men, PH = Prince Henry's Men, CM = Chamberlain's Men

Year	Boys' Companies	King's Men/Queen Anne's Men/Prince Henry's Men
1605	<i>The Dutch Courtesan</i> (Q1) CQR <i>Eastward Ho</i> (Q1) CQR <i>Eastward Ho</i> (Q2) CQR <i>Eastward Ho</i> (Q3) CQR <i>All Fools</i> (Q1) [CQR] <i>Philotas</i> (O1) [CQR]	<i>Richard III</i> (Q4) CM [KM] <i>How a Man May Choose a</i> <i>Good Wife from a Bad</i> (Q2) WM <i>1 The Honest Whore</i> (Q3) [PH] <i>The Fair Maid of Bristow</i> (Q1) [KM] <i>When You See Me You Know</i> <i>Me</i> (Q1) PH <i>1 If You Know Not Me You</i> <i>Know Nobody</i> (Q1) [QA] <i>Sejanus His Fall</i> (Q1) [KM] <i>1 Jeronimo</i> (Q1) [KM] <i>The London Prodigal</i> (Q1) KM
1606	<i>Sir Giles Goosecap</i> (Q1) CC <i>Parasitaster, or The</i> <i>Fawn</i> (Q1) CQR <i>Parasitaster, or The</i> <i>Fawn</i> (Q2) CQR, <i>The Wonder of Women,</i> <i>or Sophonisba</i> (Q1) [CQR] <i>Wily Beguiled</i> (Q1) [CP] <i>The Isle of Gulls</i> (Q1) CQR <i>Monsieur D'Olive</i> (Q1) CQR	<i>1 If You Know Not Me You</i> <i>Know Nobody</i> (Q2) [QA] <i>2 If You Know Not Me You</i> <i>Know Nobody</i> (Q1) [QA] <i>Nobody and Somebody</i> (Q1) QA
1607	<i>The Phoenix</i> (Q1) CP <i>Michaelmas Term</i> (Q1) CP <i>The Woman Hater</i> (Q1) CP <i>Bussy D'Ambois</i> (Q1) [CP] <i>Cupid's Whirligig</i> (Q1) CKR <i>Northward Ho</i> (Q1) CP <i>The Puritan, or The</i> <i>Widow of Watling Street</i> <i>(Q1)</i> CP <i>What You Will</i> (Q1) [CP] <i>The Fleer</i> (Q1) CQR <i>Westward Ho</i> (Q1) CP <i>Philotas</i> (in collection) [CQR] <i>Philotas</i> (in collection) [CQR]	<i>The Whore of Babylon</i> (Q1) PH <i>The Travels of the Three</i> <i>English Brothers</i> (Q1) QA <i>The Miseries of Enforced</i> <i>Marriage</i> (Q1) KM <i>The Revenger's Tragedy</i> (Q1) KM <i>The Devil's Charter</i> (Q1) KM <i>The Famous History of Sir</i> <i>Thomas Wyatt</i> (Q1) QA <i>Volpone</i> (Q1) [KM]
1608	<i>A Trick to Catch the Old</i> <i>One</i> (Q1) CP <i>The Family of Love</i> (Q1) CKR	<i>Richard II</i> (Q4) CM [KM] <i>1 Henry IV</i> (Q4) [KM]

	<i>Your Five Gallants</i> (Q1) <i>Law Tricks</i> (Q1) <i>Humour Out of Breath</i> (Q1) <i>A Mad World My</i> <i>Masters</i> (Q1) <i>The Dumb Knight</i> (Q1) <i>The Conspiracy and</i> <i>Tragedy of Charles</i> <i>Duke of Byron</i> (Q1)	[CP] CQR CKR CP CKR [CQR]	<i>I If You Know Not Me You</i> <i>Know Nobody</i> (Q3) <i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i> (Q1) <i>King Lear</i> (Q1) <i>A Yorkshire Tragedy</i> (Q1) <i>The Rape of Lucrece</i> (Q1)	[QA] KM KM KM QA
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